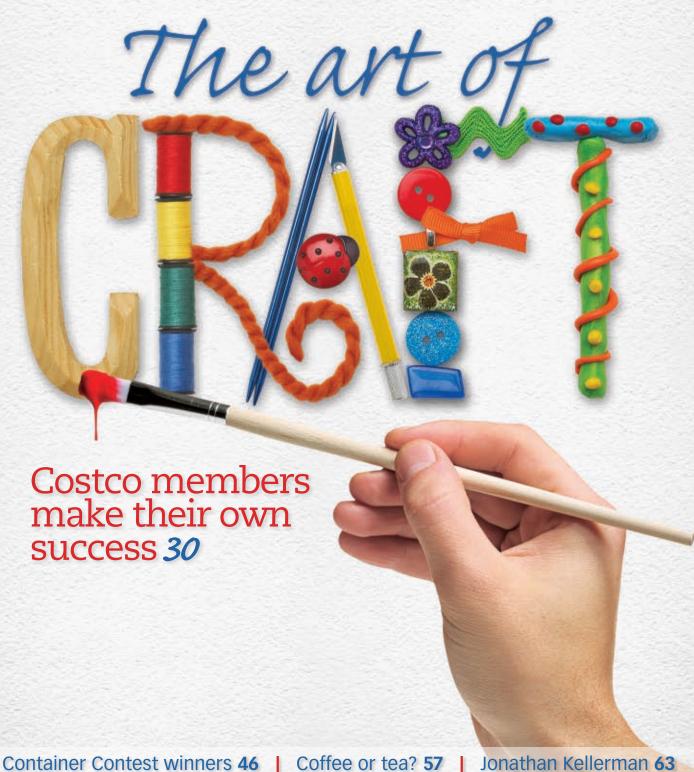
## THE COST CO March 2013 • Volume 28 • Number 3

A lifestyle magazine for Costco members





## Welcome to The Costco Connection Online Edition and Newsstand Edition

Digital editions of *The Costco Connection* and other Costco publications are available in the *Online Edition* and in the *Newsstand Edition* available for mobile devices.

The *Online Edition* opens to the current issue, with back issues found under the Back Issue tab and "*The Costco Way*" cookbooks under the Resources tab.

The Newsstand Edition opens to the current issue in a library populated with a mix of back issues and "The Costco Way" cookbooks.

**Reader Survey:** Complete a brief survey and enter a drawing for a Costco Cash card. Our reader survey is open to all *Connection* readers looking to weigh in on our content or on Costco in general; or email your comments anytime directly to *connection@costco.com*.

Advertising information: Media Kit (lite) BPA/ABC

#### Other resources:

- Special Events at Costco locations in your region
- Kirkland Signature™ Wine Connection

  Quarterly updates about the Kirkland Signature family of beer, wine and spirits at Costco
- Costco Beer, Wine and Spirits Locator
   State-by-state look at what types of alcoholic
   beverages are sold at different Costco locations
- Costco Business Centers Locator Including hours of operation and special business-center events



#### **Mobile resources**

Have you downloaded the free *Costco Connection Newsstand Edition*? It's a tablet-friendly way to take *The Connection* with you when on the go, and delivers the current issue as well as access to dozens of back issues and cookbooks. It's available for tablets and smartphones at the Apple and Google Play app stores.

And don't miss the official **Costco App**. This free app is the best way to manage all things Costco: from maps to all Costco locations and online shopping to coupon delivery, photo orders and QR-code scanning. It's available at the Apple and Google Play app stores.

## Think Costco First

MORTGAGE: PURCHASE & REFINANCING PROGRAM



Pour a bowl of cereal Check your voice mail or

Compare rates exclusively available to Costco members







Visit Costco.com and search: MORTGAGE



General Program Disclosures: Services are provided by First Choice Loan Services, Inc. (NMLS# 210764), located at 500 Campus Drive, Suite 102, Morganville, NJ 07751, a wholly owned subsidiary of First Choice Bank (NMLS ID# 177877), a New Jersey state chartered bank; First Choice Bank is registered or exempt from state licensing in the states it originates mortgage loans. You must be a Costco member to participate in the Costco Mortgage Program. First Choice Loan Services, Inc. is not an agency of the federal government or the HUD/FHA. First Choice Loan Services, Inc. has no affiliation with First Choice Bank, chartered and located in California.

### Think Costco First





No negotiating. No hassles. Just great savings.



BOATS

NEW AND FACTORY-CERTIFIED PRE-OWNED VEHICLES

**POWERSPORTS** 



Call 1-800-800-9288

or visit Costco.com and search: EZ2BUY

Costco and its affiliates do not sell automobiles, boats, motorcycles or powersports or negotiate individual transactions. A participation fee has been paid by the participating dealers. All new vehicles arranged for sale are subject to availability and a price prearranged with the participating franchised dealer. Certain vehicles may be excluded from the program. Actual savings may vary based on vehicle purchased, dealer and location. 0313 A0294 CN



HP Cartride New 88 And 1865!

## **Inkjet Cartridge Refill Service**

HP, EPSON, CANON, LEXMARK AND DELL CARTRIDGES

\$799<sub>TO</sub>\$999

## SAVE UP TO 70% WHEN COMPARED TO NEW CARTRIDGES

#### **How It Works**

- Bring your cartridges to a Costco
   1-Hour Photo counter
- Our high-tech system cleans, refills and tests your cartridges
- Refilled while you shop
- Ready in one hour

#### Why It Works

- High-quality ink matches your printing needs
- Refills provide an equal or greater number of pages as new cartridges
- Refilling cartridges multiple times saves money and the environment

For more information, visit www.CostcolnkjetRefill.com.





#### **DEPARTMENTS**

- 7 Front End BY GINNIE ROEGLIN AND DAVID W. FULLER
- Dialogue Letters from our readers
- 11 Fresh Views
  Brain food for the entrepreneur.
- 13 Consumer Connection
  BY DAVID AND
  AMANDA HOROWITZ
- 15 Financial Connection BY SUZE ORMAN
- 18 Informed Debate
  Can a fallen leader still
  promote a good cause?
- 38 Creative Cooking
  New life for leftovers
  BY GEORGIA ORCUTT
- 61 For Your Health
  Avoiding common gardening
  injuries + Better doctorpatient communications +
  Brain Injury Awareness
  Month
- 65 Arts & Entertainment Book buyers' picks
- 96 Member Connection Every member has a unique story.

COVER PHOTO: JIM FAGIOLO; THINKSTOCK, SHUTTERSTOCK

#### **FEATURES**

**21** Performance is key

Key performance indicators can pinpoint where your business is succeeding, and struggling. BY DON SADLER

**24** Peer groups

Joining a business peer group may provide you with the insight you need. BY SUSAN HIRSHORN

These popular beverages have a variety of health benefits.
Which one is best for you?

BY MALIA JACOBSON

\*Flower arranging 41

\*Getting your garden in shape 43

\*Buyer's Pick: Barbecue grill 45

\*Container Contest winners! 46

\*Drought-proof yards 51

\*Creating a bird, bee and butterfly sanctuary 53

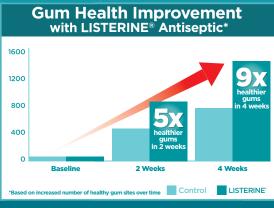
MEMBER SERVICE: 1-800-774-2678

# LISTERINE BERNER CHALLENGE



#### Jump-start to a Healthier Mouth™

According to research, it takes 21 days to form a habit, so take the first step to make your mouth healthier.



See digital editions for video.

## FEEL THE DIFFERENCE!

## gital editions

SELECTED ARTICLES AND ADS in the digital editions of The Connection are now enhanced with video clips or other digital content.

A tablet icon indicates additional material available in the digital versions of articles.

Ads with enhancements display a universal "play" button.

#### Finding the digital editions of The Connection

The Connection's Online Edition can be accessed by all computers with an Internet connection at www.costcoconnection.com or through links on Costco.com.

The Newsstand Edition is a mobile app version of *The Connection* for Apple and Android smartphones and tablets. It can be downloaded from the iTunes or Google Play app stores.



Apple users can sign up for 12 issues of the Newsstand Edition and will be notified when each new issue becomes available.

#### **DIGITAL CONTENT**

Rhonda Abrams on business success and failure 11

A classic Fight Back! video clip with David Horowitz 13

Debra Prinzing's favorite floral arranging techniques 41

Vanessa Diffenbaugh provides insight into her book *The* Language of Flowers 67

View the dramatic trailer for Zero Dark Thirty 69

Hugh Jackman sings "Who Am I" from Les Misérables 71

**Wolverine sings!** 

Sorrento is so right

Jean Valjean. BY STEVE FISHER

Hugh Jackman recounts the

Nestled on the idvllic Amalfi

Coast, Sorrento is a gateway

to many Italian treasures.

BY SARAH TORROMINO-BASTIÉ

passion and anxiety surrounding his iconic role as Les Misérables

#### **INSIDE COSTCO**

77 Costco Auto Program The simplicity of the program is just one of the many benefits, which includes great no-haggling prices. BY T. FOSTER JONES

#### **81** American Express rewards

American Express rewards are in the mail for Costco members. Find out what some have done with their money. BY ANITA THOMPSON

#### 83 From Peru to you

Peruvian Pima cotton. the fiber in Costco's new Kirkland Signature™ men's and women's T-shirts, provides softness and strength. BY T. FOSTER JONES

#### 86 Buying Smart: Sustainable shrimp program

The steps to initiate a sustainable aquaculture program are many and lengthy, but worth the time and effort.

BY TRACY SCHNEIDER

90 What's New 94 Special Events

95 Services Update



#### FEATURES CONTINUED

**Author exclusive!** Popular novelist Jonathan Kellerman writes an essay just for Costco Connection readers. BY JONATHAN KELLERMAN

**Book Pick:** 

The Language of Flowers

Author Vanessa Diffenbaugh crafts a coming-of-age story about a foster child who uses flowers to communicate. BY HOPE KATZ GIBBS

69 A shot in the dark

Jessica Chastain talks about her role in the award-nominated film Zero Dark Thirty.

BY BRYAN REESMAN

Sorrento's famous lemon groves, the source of limoncello, a sweet Italian liqueur.



## One small pill. No fishy smell or aftertaste. MegaRed, the better omega-3 choice.



Now MegaRed® brings you more ways to support even more areas of your health. Easily absorbed MegaRed® Omega-3 Krill Oil and MegaRed® Extra Strength support your heart health and more.\* And for powerful joint comfort, look for new MegaRed® Joint Care instead of glucosamine and chondroitin.\* All in one small pill per day, with no fishy smell or aftertaste.

For more information, call 1-800-526-6251.

\* THESE STATEMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN EVALUATED BY THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION. THESE PRODUCTS ARE NOT INTENDED TO DIAGNOSE, TREAT, CURE OR PREVENT ANY DISEASE.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>‡</sup> Supportive but not conclusive research shows that consumption of EPA and DHA omega-3 fatty acids may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease. © 2013 Schiff Nutrition Group, Inc. 678-B1



PUBLISHER Ginnie Roeglin groeglin@costco.com EDITOR David W. Fuller 425-313-8510 dfuller@costco.com **EDITORIAL DIRECTOR** Anita Thompson 425-313-6442 athompson@costco.com

#### **DEPUTY EDITOR, DIGITAL**

Stephanie E. Ponder 425-427-7134 sponder@costco.com

**DEPUTY EDITOR, INTERNATIONAL** 

Tim Talevich 425-313-6759 ttalevich@costco.com

**DEPUTY EDITOR, U.S.** 

#### T. Foster Jones 425-313-6748 Tod.Jones@costco.com **ASSOCIATE EDITORS**

Lorelle Gilpin, Ottawa 613-221-2009 Lorelle. Gilpin@costco.com Sue Knowles, London 011-44-1923-213113 sknowles@costco.co.uk Sungwon Pae, Seoul 82-2-2630-2700 swpae@costcokr.com

#### **ONLINE EDITOR**

David Wight David.Wight@costco.com

#### REPORTERS

Will Fifield wfifield@costco.com Steve Fisher Steve. Fisher@costco.com

COPY EDITOR Miriam Bulmer

#### CONTRIBUTORS

Rhonda Abrams, Craigh Barboza, Sarah Torromino-Bastié, John Gallucci Jr., Hope Katz Gibbs, Susan Hirshorn, Amanda Horowitz, David Horowitz, Malia Jacobson, Jonathan Kellerman, Laura Langston, Georgia Orcutt, Suze Orman, Kate Parham, Stephen Powell, Debra Prinzing, Bryan Reesman, Ronald E. Riggio, Don Sadler, Tracy Schneider, Fran Schumer, Eva Shaw, Diane Stapp Williams

#### ART DIRECTOR

Doris Winters dwinters@costco.com

#### **ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTOR**

Lory Williams Iwilliams@costco.com

#### **GRAPHIC DESIGNERS**

Ken Broman, Bill Carlson, Susan Detlor, Steven Lait, Chris Rusnak, David Schneider, Brenda Shecter

#### PRODUCTION MANAGER Pam Sather, Seattle psather@costco.com

#### ASSISTANT PRODUCTION MANAGER Antolin Matsuda amatsuda@costco.com

COLOR SPECIALIST MaryAnne Robbers mrobbers@costco.com

#### **ADVERTISING MANAGER**

Jane Klein Shucklin 425-313-8277 jshucklin@costco.com

#### **ASSISTANT ADVERTISING MANAGER**

Kathi Tipper-Holgersen 425-313-6581 ktipper@costco.com

#### ADVERTISING COORDINATORS

Melanie Woods 425-313-2558 mwoods@costco.com Jordan Maughan 425-313-6969 jmaughan@costco.com

#### **ADVERTISING / PROMOTION COPYWRITER**

Bill Urlevich

#### NATIONAL ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVES

West: John McCarthy 805-870-4437 johnmccarthy1@sbcglobal.net Texas: Nuala Berrells 214-660-9713 nuala@sbcglobal.net Northeast: Frank Colonno 201-962-2759

fcmediapartners@optonline.net Midwest: Cheryl Solomon 847-749-4875 csolomon@solomonspacesales.com

#### **BUSINESS MANAGER**

Janet Burgess

#### **CIRCULATION MANAGER**

Rossie Cruz 425-313-6715 rcruz@costco.com

**CIRCULATION / EDITORIAL ASSISTANT** Dorothy Strakele 425-313-6899 connection@costco.com

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

D. Ted Harris 425-313-2937 dtharris@costco.com

#### **COSTCO WHOLESALE**

P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088 999 Lake Drive, Issaquah, Washington 98027 Fax: 425-313-6718 Email: connection@costco.com

For information on warehouse hours and more: 1-800-774-2678 or visit Costco.com







The Costco Connection is published by Costco Wholesale. All editorial material, including editorial comments, opinion and statements of fact appearing in this publication, represents the views of the respective authors and does not necessarily carry the endorsement of Costco Wholesale or its officers. Information in *The Costco Connection* is gathered from sources considered to be reliable, but the accuracy of all information cannot be guaranteed. The publication of any advertisements is not to be construed as an endorsement of the product or service offered unless it is specifically stated in the ad that there is such approval or endorsement. Products advertised may not be available at all locations at the time of publication. Publishing offices are located at 999 Lake Drive, Issaquah, WA 98027. Copyright © 2013 Costco Wholesale.

#### from the publisher's desk

#### Ginnie Roeglin

ACCORDING TO BEHAVIORAL research, the best mood-enhancing therapy might be found in one's own yard. The study found that the presence of flowers triggers happiness and feelings of life satisfaction. Our Home and Garden special section in this issue can help you start enhancing your own mood and preparing your outdoor space for the spring and summer months to come.

First up, our story on page 41 offers tips on how to bring outdoor beauty inside in gorgeous bouquets. Before you can reap the rewards, though, you first must do a spring cleanup and prepare a good foundation for your garden to grow. You'll find tips to help get your garden



Ginnie Roeglin is Senior Vice President, E-Commerce and Publishing, and Publisher of The Costco Connection.

and yard into shape on pages 43 and 51. You might also pick up some ideas and inspiration from the very talented Costco members who won our 2012 Container Contest, beginning on page 46. Costco warehouses offer many of the outdoor plants and flowers that attract birds, bees and butterflies, highlighted on page 53.

March is also a good time to start preparing for outdoor cooking and entertaining. Costco warehouses have a great selection of beautiful patio furniture, patio heaters, umbrellas, sheds, pots and grills. Our website carries an expanded selection of outdoor furniture, patio items and barbecues, with delivery directly to your home. Some of the items on Costco.com are featured beginning after page 74.

According to the Costco members in our cover story, there are many opportunities for creative crafters who might want to develop their passion into a business. Costco and Costco.com often carry craft-related items, and Costco's small-business services can help take care of the business side of a creative endeavor.

In other areas of sustainability, this month's Buying Smart, on page 86, explains the complexities of sustainable processes involved with aquaculture and the considerable progress that has been made. But, as Costco vice president and general merchandise manager Tracy Mauldin-Avery explains, we all have a long way to go.

If you have the Costco American Express Card, did you remember to watch for your annual rebate check (see page 81), which was included in your February statement? Perhaps you can use your check to spruce up your yard.

Happy Easter and Passover from all of us at Costco!



David W. Fuller is Assistant Vice President, Publishing, and Editor of The Costco Connection.

#### from the editor's desk

David W. Fuller

CHANGE IS in the air.

No, I'm not about to wax poetic about spring.

And, yes, change is pretty much a constant in our lives. But even change has its seasons, and right now I am seeing a lot of transitions in both business and personal arenas. Some people worry about change; some people embrace it. There really is nothing inherently positive or negative about "a disturbance in 'The Force,' " as Obi-Wan Kenobi would call it.

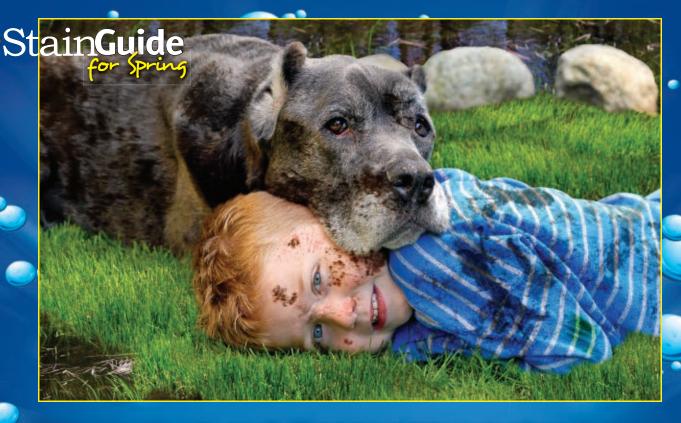
In a business context, disruption is best seen as an opportunity: a time to reassess basics, to develop a new mix

of goals, resources and talents. Certainly the transition to the new is likely to not be as comfortable as the old. However, if the vision is clear, the plan solid and the execution adroit, the new will bring not just comfort but advancement, for the embracers and the worriers.

The process is as necessary in business as it is in life, which brings me to the personal arena. Next month, my daughter is due to give birth to the person who will turn me into a grandfather. To see the changes in my daughter and her husband, the trepidations and expectations with which they are facing this huge transition to parenthood, is to witness change in one of its grandest, yet most daunting, forms.

However, the challenges and joys of this pregnancy will not be the new normal in their lives. The new normal will come once their child arrives.

As with a business that has gone through a transition, it may be that everything will have changed but, fate willing, with new life, things will have advanced.



OxiClean Versatile tackles over 101 different types of stains, is color safe and chlorine free. Check out the latest tips and tricks below to remove your family's spring stains.



#### Red Wine on Tablecloth

Get Out Tough Red Wine Stains!

- Dissolve up to a full scoop of OxiClean" Versatile Stain Remover per gallon of warm water.
- Add stained item and soak for 1–6 hours.
- Wash as you normally would, with detergent and OxiClean.



Scan to See How to Get the Tough Stains Out!



#### **Dingy Patio Furniture**

Fight Messes on Hard Surfaces!

- Mix OxiClean Versatile Stain Remover powder with water in a bucket (as directed on packaging). Be sure that powder is completely dissolved.
- Apply solution to surface with mop or sponge. Allow solution to stand 5—30 minutes (but not dry).
- · Scrub as necessary.
- Rinse with cool water.



#### **Dirty Sport Uniforms**

Pre-Soak Tough, Dried-In Stains!

- Dissolve up to a full scoop of OxiClean Versatile
   Stain Remover per gallon of warm water.
- Add stained item and soak for 1–6 hours.
- Wash as you normally would, with detergent and OxiClean™.

[For complete instructions, refer to directions on packaging.]



#### **Brighter Colors & Whiter Whites** *Add a Scoop to Every Load!*

- Add OxiClean" Versatile Stain Remover to every load of laundry to boost your detergent's cleaning power!
  - ✓ Prevent colors from fading.
  - ✓ Whites get whiter and colors stay brighter!
  - ✓ Better stain removal.



OxiClean Gets the Tough Stains Out.



**YES.** It creates a safer and simpler shopping environment for both customer and retailer.

Stephen Mondini Fair Oaks, Texas

**NO.** You must not forget about the little guys: churches' collection plates, children's spending money, tips in the travel and dining industry and more.

James Wightman Naperville, Illinois

#### **Member comments**

#### **Berry impressed**

I was so impressed with the story about the açaí berry of Brazil ["Berry healthy," February 2013]. I was most fascinated by the triple bottom line, which considers not only the profit for Sambazon, but the farmers, the local communities and the Brazilian rain forest as well.

Now I not only enjoy a new, healthy drink, but know that I am contributing to a larger community as well.

Jeanne Befano New Market, Maryland

#### **Macular moment**

I was pleased to see the article on macular degeneration ["AMD Awareness Month," February 2013]. Because my dad has this disorder, my ophthalmologist is watching me closely for any symptoms. She suggested I take lutein and zeaxanthin as supplements to possibly combat this disease. I found the Trunature Vision Complex that you offer at Costco is a good solution and just started purchasing it to take daily.

Dianne Pomon Pottstown, Pennsylvania

#### **Big on Costco**

I am a larger woman. I cannot tell you how many times in the past I wanted to purchase the beautiful women's clothing items carried by Costco.

Yes, beauty comes in all sizes ["Style, in any size," February 2013]. Wow! I just stopped in yesterday at our local Spokane Valley store and there they were: magnificent name-brand clothing in plus sizes.

Thank you for stepping up and being the leader we Costco members count on.

Jan Krogh Spokane, Washington

#### More room in the bathroom

Our house was designed by us and much consideration was given to the physical limitations of seniors ["Restroom revival," February 2013].

One of the biggest issues for us is wide doorways, so that a wheelchair can easily get in and out of a room.

Another is the opening position of the bathroom doors. The bathroom doors should open to the outside. In an emergency, it could be a matter of life and death.

If someone falls, is unconscious and lies against the door, it may take too long to reach the injured person.

Maria Grillmeyer Novato, California

### Connection comments from the Internet

"Congrats to Sambazon for Costco cover, spreading the word about market driven conservation and bounty of the Amazon!"

Tweeted by Laura Leinweber @LauraLeinweber

"Be inspired, read [your] Costco Connection mag on Laura Schroff's friendship with Maurice Mazyck in new book An Invisible Thread."

Tweeted by Susie Stangland @susiestang

"Check out this great article about Hands Only CPR in your Costco Connection this month." [www.costcoconnection.com/connection/201302#pg62]

Tweeted by JSusanne Dean @caliknits



MONTHLY READER SURVEY

#### Win a Costco Cash card worth \$50!

WHAT DO you think of this issue of *The Connection*? Tell us and you could be one of five winners of a \$50 Costco Cash card! Take a moment to complete our anonymous reader feedback survey by going to Costco.com and clicking "Costco Connection Magazine." Click "Reader Survey" on the welcome page. Upon completion, you will have the option to enter the drawing.

## Subscription changes

By email: customer service @ costco.com

**By phone:** -800-774-2678



**By fax:** (425) 313-6823

**By mail:** Membership Processing P.O. Box 34783 Seattle, WA 98124-1088

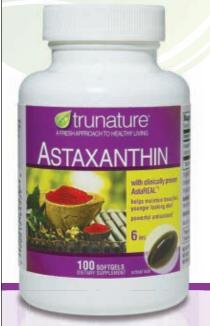
Please allow four to six weeks for processing.

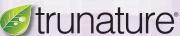
Don't miss out on the latest product and membership news and information from Costco—enter your email address at www.costco.com. Information will remain strictly confidential.

#### Have something to say?

Readers are encouraged to submit letters to our editors on any topic or issue covered in *The Connection*. Please include your full name and phone number or address. Send an email to *dialogue@costco.com*; or write to: Dialogue, *The Costco Connection*, P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088; or fax to (425) 313-6718. The editors reserve the right to edit letters for publication.

our healthy skin begins from within. Support your good looks from the inside out with trunature® Astaxanthin 6 mg with clinically proven AstaREAL®. Helps maintain beautiful, youngerlooking skin.





A FRESH APPROACH TO HEALTHY LIVING

AstaREAL® is a registered trademark of Fuji Chemical Co., Ltd.

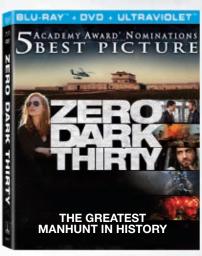
Visit Costco.com for additional trunature® items.

These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure

© 2013 trunature®

WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM | AVAILABLE NOW

## "A HIGH-VOLTAGE



#### ON BLU-RAY COMBO PACK & DVD MARCH 19

Includes #ULTRAVIOLET

RESTRICTED

COLUMBIA A



© 2012 Zero Dark Thirty LLC. All Rights Reserved. © 2013 Layout and Design Sony Pictures Home Entertainment Inc. WAREHOUSE ONLY

All Rights Reserved.

#### **Using The Connection**

New: When you see this "play" button in an ad, it means there are added audiovisual features only in the free digital newsstand and online editions of The Connection. Learn about those editions at costcoconnection.com.

- All ads indicate whether a product is available in the warehouse, on Costco.com or both.
- Products are scheduled to be available during The Connection's month of publication and are noted as in warehouse "early in month" (1st to 10th), "mid-month" (11th to 21st) or "late in month" (22nd to 31st).
- Shop early in the month for best selection on seasonal items.
- Costco.com carries few of the products available at the warehouses, but offers 3,500 additional items, including line extensions and supplemental products.
- Prices are usually not listed because they have not been finalized at the time of printing and may vary from one part of the country to another due to shipping costs. We hope members know to check Costco first when comparison shopping.
- To keep prices low, Costco does not offer a telephone service allowing members to call in for prices or product availability.



#### RHONDA ABRAMS: STRATEGIES



Rhonda Abrams' newest book is Entrepreneurship: A Real-World Approach. Register for her free businesstips newsletter at www.planning shop.com.

**Tablet or** 

smartphone?

Rhonda speaks

more about

this subject

in our digital

newsstand and

online editions.

## The odds of success

I once heard a distinguished professor make an outrageous statement: 90 percent of new businesses fail. Repeatedly, I also hear small-business "experts" say that 50 percent of all businesses fail within five years. Hogwash!

When I hear "facts" like that, it's like fingernails on a blackboard. I know numbers like that scare people away from starting a business or discourage those who are already in business. "If so many businesses fail," some will think, "what chance do I have?"

But I've looked at the statistics for business births and deaths closely, and I know of no credible study showing anything close to a 90 percent death rate—or even a 50 percent "failure" rate in five years.

What they do show is that half of new businesses disappear from any public records within five years. But in most cases, while it may be true the company has closed its doors,

it hasn't necessarily "failed." In fact, a company that is thriving may be counted as a failure.

For instance, I had my own successful consulting practice for many years. Like most sole proprietors, I reported my business income on my personal income tax return, using my own Social Security number. As the business grew, I incorporated and my business got its own tax number. So my first business probably shows up in statistics as a business "death."

even though it was actually thriving.

Often, businesses don't die or fail; the owners close them for reasons unrelated to whether the business is making money.

Take restaurants, for instance. Restaurants

have a notoriously high "failure" rate. Yet, one study showed that reasons other than economic necessity made the owners decide to throw in the spatula. They cited divorce, poor health and, most important, an unwillingness to continue to make the immense time commitment necessary as reasons for shutting their doors.

Most businesses close because of "I had no idea" syndrome: The entrepreneur didn't really understand what it takes to run a company. To greatly increase your chance of success, find out as much as you can before you open your doors.

So, what about that 90 percent failure rate the professor cited? Listening closely, I realized he didn't mention any time period. So, perhaps the professor is right after all. I think it's safe to assume that within some period of time—let's say 50 years—90 percent of all businesses will close. I can live with those odds.

#### More in archives

On Costco.com, enter "Connection." At online edition, search "Rhonda Abrams."

## Are you confusing people with your leadership style?

"YOU'RE UP ONE day and down the next. No problem—the people who work for you can just go with the flow, right? Wrong," says Karen Wright, whose company, Parachute Executive Coaching (www.parachute executivecoaching.com), is a Costco member in Toronto. Wright, the author of The Complete Executive: The 10-Step System for Great Leadership Performance (Bibliomotion, 2012), offers these tips on creating a steady leadership persona.

**Stay cool.** Your people need to know the difference between a mood swing and a major business issue. Help them out by staying on an even keel at least 90 percent of the time. When you're down they'll know it's serious, and when you're up they will know there is real cause for celebration.

Walk your talk. The higher you rise on the ladder, the more people are watching and the more easily you'll be called out if your actions don't match your words. Make sure you are a living example of the values you expect others to uphold. Get your story straight. If you have achieved success, chances are people are going to want to hear about how you made it to the top. Don't embellish or inflate. The more relatable it is, the better. Besides, the truth will always catch up with you.

Keep it real. Never assume you're doing fine, and never presume you know what others are thinking. Ask for feedback, whether directly or through a confidential survey process, and be open to what you hear. You can't expect the people around you to accept feedback if you are not willing to do the same.

**Stand for something.** If you're in a position to inspire people and lead them toward something important and exciting, don't be shy. Let your passion show. Your authentic excitement will be infectious. And if you are not a naturally comfortable public speaker, get trained and practice, practice, practice: Few skills are as important in a leader as the ability to energize a crowd.

## **Expand your** knowledge in 2013

IF YOU'RE A small-business owner or contemplating becoming one, but feel like you still have a lot to learn, you can go back to school or take expensive training classes. Or you can check out the Small Business Administration's Small Business Learning Center for free 30-minute training programs, on your own time (www.sba.gov/sba-learn ing-center/training).

#### SBA training courses include:

- Young Entrepreneurs: An Essential Guide to Starting Your Own Business
- Encore Entrepreneurs (for individuals planning to start a business after earlier career endeavors)
- How to Write a Business Plan
- Government Contracting 101
- A Veterans' Guide: How to Win Federal Contracts
- Women-Owned Small-Business
   Program—A Guide for Contracting Officers
   (about increasing contract opportunities for women-owned small businesses)
- Business Technology Simplified (basic tech tools to help you run your business more efficiently)
- Take Your Business Global—An Introduction to Exporting
- Disaster Recovery: Guide to SBA's Disaster Assistance Programs.

#### Yours from the Start.



Select the Desktop tile and get back to the desktop you are familiar with.



#### Go back to Start

Tap the Windows key 🌆 on your keyboard or device to get back to the Windows 8

#### Bring your friends

Gather all your contacts and social networks in one place.

#### Download more apps

#### Store it and share it

Store your music, photos, and docs in the cloud with SkyDrive

#### Listen to music

stream millions of songs FREE with the Xbox Music app.\*



\*Free streaming limited to 10 hours/month after 6 months; unlimited with paid subscription. Compatible devices and internet required; ISP fees apply. See xbox.com/music

WAREHOUSE ONLY | AVAILABLE NOW





See digital editions for video.



#### Introducing the new Office.

The tools you trust, now more powerful than ever.

Sold separately from PC.



## Stay ahead in the cloud



David Horowitz is a leading consumer advocate. David's daughter Amanda Horowitz is a consumer guide and the co-founder of Fightback.com. Email David and Amanda at info@ fightback.com.

CLOUD COMPUTING IS an influential trend in technology for consumers and businesses. Cloud subscribers are expected to reach 625 million users worldwide this year, according to IHS iSuppli, a market research firm.

If you don't speak techie, your understanding of the cloud may be thin. Google spokesperson Tim Drinan has a user-friendly explanation: "Every time you use the Internet, you are cloud computing. All the information you seek is stored on servers in various locations around the world. Whether you're watching a video, reading the news or listening to music, you're getting information from the cloud, not from your computer's hard drive."

Google Drive is a leading cloud service provider. Apple's iCloud, Amazon Cloud Drive, Dropbox, Box.com, Microsoft SharePoint and HPCloud also offer ways to store your personal files on cloud servers and access them from any computer or mobile device, which is a big plus if you're on the go. Other cloud pluses include lower risk of losing files to crashed hard drives, simple file sharing and cost advantages for businesses.

Along with the pluses come several considerations: Cloud computing requires broadband access, providers must maintain 24/7 uptime and privacy concerns are an ongoing issue.

University of North Carolina computer security researcher Yinqian Zhang believes consumers need to be aware of availability and confidentiality issues when using the cloud. "You don't want your uploaded files getting lost, [being] inaccessible or read by others," Zhang says. He believes the security protections companies provide for cloud users are "only effective if implemented correctly."

As an example, Zhang cites a case in 2011 when Dropbox user accounts became unlocked because of a programming bug that allowed anyone to access the company's 25 million customers' online storage lockers. The company resolved the issue in four hours. A Dropbox representative did not wish to comment.

Chris Greer, senior adviser for the National

Institute of Standards and Technology, says, "It's always a risk, whether you're using your data internally or on the cloud independent of the platform. In the case of cloud services, someone else is providing that security for you rather than you doing it yourself. You want to know a great deal about your service provider, understand your service agreement and [know] how that security service is going to be provided."

Paul Underwood, chief operating officer and managing partner at Emagined Security, calls for consumer action. He says, "Cloud service providers are spending time and money improving their security. The more we, as consumers, ask them to be more secure, the more they will respond."

But it's not only companies' security practices that come into play. Renowned hacker-turned-security-consultant Samy Kamkar, who created the first cross-site scripting virus, says, "There will always be consumer cloud services which have been infiltrated by hackers, and sometimes this may never be known publicly, even by the cloud provider themselves." Kamkar thinks the only answer is self-protection. "Unfortunately, we don't know if a cloud provider has enough security or not until it's broken into, which is why it's better to rely on your own level of security," he explains.

Here are some steps you can take to feel confident and secure when using the cloud:

- Create strong passwords. Don't use information that can be easily guessed by others, like your birthdate, address, name or phone number.
- Use a variety of passwords on all the different sites you frequent. That way, one password won't unlock all of your accounts.
- Use your own encryption tools before files are uploaded to the cloud. (Keep in mind that if your local encryption keys are stored on your computer, but your computer is insecure and easily hacked into, it defeats the purpose of having your files encrypted.)
- Enable two-step authentication so that your account cannot be accessed without a code first being texted to your phone.
- Update your computer's operating system, browsers and software regularly, as they may contain important security updates.
- Check your computer with a reputable, up-to-date antivirus program.



#### **Tablet or smartphone?**

You can watch a classic Fight Back! clip on The Connection's digital newsstand and online versions.

## Tip from Fight Back!

#### Scams on seniors

SENIORS, BEWARE OF the Medicare phone scam.

Here's how it works: A caller claiming to be with Medicare or another government office informs you that your new Medicare card is in the mail, then asks for your banking information to set up a direct deposit for your Medicare funds. The caller may also ask for your Medicare number.

To avoid this scam, only give your personal information in person to doctors or other providers approved by Medicare.

If you gave your personal information to someone and you suspect identity theft, call the Federal Trade Commission's ID Theft Hotline at 1-877-438-4338.—AH

#### More on online storage

WHAT'S NEXT FOR online storage? In an effort to contend with the mass amounts of data that need to be stored on modern devices, a 2012 Harvard research study led by geneticist Dr. George Church concluded that computer data can be stored in one's DNA. Which leads us to believe that maybe one day we'll be able to pass our Twitter handle, @fightback, through a handshake!

#### Fight#Back! gets social

WHAT DO YOU do to be a proactive consumer and effect positive change in the world? What do you believe in? What do you Fight Back for?

Send us your photos, videos and comments on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, marked #IFightBack #Costco#Consumer#Connection, and we'll retweet them to and share them with the entire Costco community.

© 2013 AMANDA HOROWITZ MEDIA, LLC ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

#### **Have a question for Fight Back?**

Just log on to www.fightback.com and email them at info@fightback.com. Questions and answers of the greatest interest to Costco members will be used in this column (with the permission of the contributor) and will be posted on www.fightback.com.

More in archives
On Costco.com, enter "Connection";
at Online Edition, search
"David Horowitz."

## Think Costco First



#### AskSUZE **Orman**

Email your personalfinance questions to
suze@costco.com.
Please include
"Suze Orman Q&A"
in the subject line; or fax to
(425) 313-6718; or mail to
Q&A with Suze Orman
The Costco Connection
P.O. Box 34088
Seattle, WA 98124-1088.

Suze will answer selected questions in this bimonthly column. She regrets that unpublished questions cannot be answered individually.

Suze Orman's TV show airs Saturday nights on CNBC. Suze can be contacted at www.suzeorman.com.



"Connection." At Online

Edition, search

"financial connection."

## In trusts we trust

#### **By Suze Orman**

Would you please explain the pros and cons of a revocable trust and an irrevocable trust?

Costanza G. Los Angeles, California

PEOPLE WHO ARE worried about getting sued or have enough assets to trigger the federal estate tax find that an irrevocable trust can be a useful tool. Assets inside an irrevocable trust are protected from creditors, and the assets are not considered part of the estate for purposes of calculating federal estate tax liability. In 2013, the first \$5.25 million of each individual's estate is exempt from estate tax. (Going forward, that threshold will be indexed to inflation.)

If your estate isn't near that limit, I think it's important to understand what you give up if you place assets inside an irrevocable trust: control of that money. That's what the "irrevocable" is all about.

With a revocable living trust you maintain complete control and flexibility. While you are alive, assets you have put inside your trust remain 100 percent yours to use as you please. You can also make changes to your trust as often as you want, altering beneficiaries or changing the terms of how you want your assets handled once you pass.

Creating a revocable living trust with an incapacity clause will allow someone you designate to step in and handle your financial affairs if at some point you can no longer make those decisions for yourself. And when you die, your heirs will not have to deal with probate. Wills are required to be approved by a probate judge; with a revocable trust your estate is disbursed exactly as you have laid out in the legal document. No need for your heirs to get court approval.

The bottom line is that both types of trusts are very different, and one doesn't exclude the other. Get yourself a good estate lawyer and check them out for yourself.

I have been retired for 20-plus years. What is a creditable recommendation for investment allocation between stocks, bonds and cash after retirement? Also, I follow the 4 percent guideline for withdrawals from investments. Is that prudent? I know many retirees have the same allocation question.

Bill S. Sequim, Washington

RIGHT NOW, HIGH-QUALITY bonds earn 2 to 3 percent, and I don't have to tell you that cash earns close to nothing. Meanwhile, inflation is running around 3 percent or so. If all your money is in cash and bonds, you're likely not earning enough to maintain your standard of living. Stocks can provide higher inflation-beating gains. Of course, they can also go down in value, thus the guideline to limit your stock allocation to 110 (or

#### Also:

- Post-retirement investing
- Investing for college

100) minus your age. I happen to think dividend-paying stocks are a smart way to invest in stocks. Some low-cost exchange-traded funds and no-load mutual funds that focus on dividend-paying stocks are currently yielding 3 percent or more.

As for how much you can afford to withdraw from your accounts, 4 percent is a good benchmark for someone who retires at 65 or so. Someone retiring earlier might want to start with a lower withdrawal rate. Retirees at 70 or so might consider a higher initial withdrawal rate (that you then adjust for inflation each year). The goal is to make sure you don't outlive your money. But I want to stress that the 4 percent rule is just a solid starting point to run your own numbers. Someone with an old-fashioned pension and Social Security might be able to invest more in stocks or withdraw at a higher rate because of those guaranteed income streams.

I am 31 years old and just had a baby boy, and was looking to invest money for his college fund. I read mixed reviews about 529 plans. And if not 529, what other plans are there? Where to securely invest so my son has money for college?

Julia T. Springfield, New Jersey

I DON'T KNOW what reviews you've read, but 529 college savings plans are a smart way to save for college. Of course, as with most any investment, there are good options and less good options. At Savingforcollege.com you can learn about "direct-sold" plans, which have the lowest fees. That's what you want. Avoid the more expensive "adviser-sold" 529 plans. (If you work with an adviser, that's fine. But you should pay the adviser a flat fee, not commissions on investments.)

You don't have to stick with a plan offered by your state. Anyone can invest in any state's plan and use the money to help pay for any college in any state. The only advantage to sticking with an in-state plan is if special state-tax breaks are offered.

So now that I've told you how to find the good 529 plans, I have to tell you that your first priority must be to have your retirement savings on track. Most 31-year-olds I meet, especially new parents, aren't anywhere near on track.

There are loans for college. There are no loans for your retirement. Trust me: 20, 30, 40 years from now your little boy will be a grown man who will thank you for being in such great financial shape that he won't need to step in and support you later on.



#### Your business needs it. We've got it. Now \$4 off.

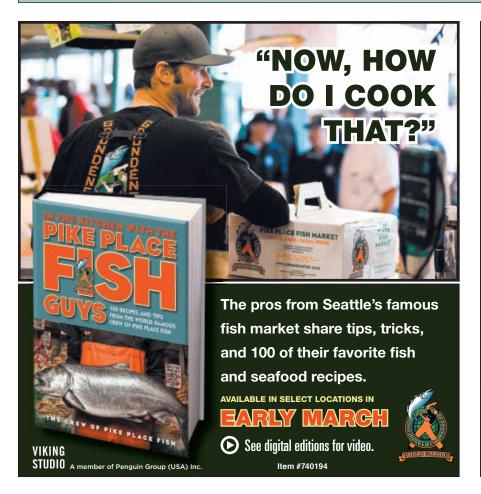
Let Costco save your small business even more time and money with Marathon Ultra™ Standard Roll

Bath Tissue. A \$4.00 instant rebate is available through March 31, 2013. And each package contains individually wrapped rolls for improved hygiene and enhanced image. Get more value and savings for your small business by stocking up on a full range of Marathon® bath tissue, towels and napkins at Costco.



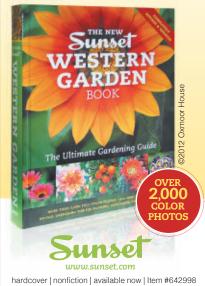
2013 Georgia-Pacific Professional, All rights reserved.

WAREHOUSE ONLY | AVAILABLE NOW



#### DREAM. GROW. ENJOY.

Inspiring gardeners to get planting in backyards, rooftops, traffic medians or urban canyons! With over 2,000 gorgeous color photos — completely updated and redesigned for the way you garden today — it's easier than ever to use for beginners and pros alike.





#### Introducing the Chronos Nano RITE Hearing Aid

This new receiver-in-the-ear (RITE) solution is designed to simplify your life by enhancing speech understanding and listening comfort, and reproducing sounds naturally.

Featuring our most advanced feedback-cancellation technology, the Chronos Nano RITE also suppresses annoying whistling sounds before they become audible, so you can hear better now – with confidence.

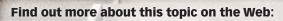




## Can a fallen leader still promote a good cause?

ATHLETE LANCE ARMSTRONG raised millions of dollars to fight cancer. Humanitarian Greg Mortenson gave thousands of poor children an education. Both leaders inspired millions of people until scandals surrounding their behavior had many questioning whether the good they did was in vain. Others maintain that the good they did can't be undone and that they can continue to have a positive impact. Can a fallen leader still promote a good cause?

What do you think?



- www.philanthropy.com (Search: "Do fallen leaders hurt their charities' efforts?")
- www.leadershipnow.com/sanborn.html (Search: "Why leaders fail")



#### R'Shea Sesler Las Vegas, NV



One flaw should not cancel out a lifetime [of] good, [just] as a lifetime of bad should not be overlooked because

[of] one kind act.

#### M.G. Ralston Sullivans Island, SC



Redemption is always possible. History is replete with "fallen" leaders who have subsequently done

marvelous things.

#### Judith O. Johnson Memphis, TN



One's personal flaws should not build a wall [against] goodness.

#### NO

#### from members:

#### Richard Salazar El Paso, TX



Breaking your trust ... shows you didn't believe in your own message. If you can't follow [yourself],

how do you expect others to follow you?

#### Sherry Coughlin Bedford, MA



Public figures are looked at as role models and need to be scandal free.

#### Edward J. Fairchild Farmington Hills, MI



In Armstrong's case, for a man to overcome cancer and then to put abusive substances in his

body ... he can't expect credibility.



#### from an expert in the field:



**Stephen Powell**, executive director of Mentoring USA (*www.mentoringusa.org*), was honored by the White House in 2012 as a Champion of Change for following in the footsteps of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

AS THE LEADER of a nonprofit organization and as a parent, I am mindful of how important it is to model positive behavior and use language meant to encourage

and not discourage young up-and-coming leaders. When children fall, we encourage them to get up, dust themselves off and keep moving. When we make a mistake, we are often encouraged to reevaluate the situation, make the necessary adjustments and keep pressing forward.

So when it comes to the question of whether a fallen leader can still promote a good cause, the answer is yes—after time has passed, of course, as circumstances may vary.

No leader is immune to a fall, because leaders are human. However, certain flaws, such as arrogance, are sometimes the precursor to the fall of a leader, regardless of how good the cause. So leaders should be selected carefully, using a keen sense of discernment, one that protects the cause in the long run.

A strong leader demonstrates exemplary character and is often a source of inspiration for many, qualities that are necessary in elevating the impact and visibility of a good cause. A wise leader removes and/or minimizes distractions in

an effort to function in an orderly and purposedriven manner.

The qualities and traits that help persons ascend to leadership—resilience, patience, determination, confidence, courage, humility, integrity—are the same qualities that help leaders pick themselves up and move forward after a fall, whatever the fall may be. However, positions of leadership do not grant one permission to be irresponsible with power and/or reckless in judgment when entrusted to lead and promote a cause.

Rebuilding trust and restoring one's reputation are arguably two of the most difficult tasks on the planet for any individual or brand. So it is essential, as a leader, to always remain mindful of the consequences of one's actions while minimizing mistakes.

Organizations and businesses form best practices from lessons learned; individuals build character through mistakes made and making a commitment to not repeat a mistake or offense.

When leaders choose to promote a good cause, they should do so with an understanding that they are committing to something greater than themselves. When we absolve fallen leaders who accept responsibility and own up to their mistakes, we also commit to something and promote something greater than ourselves: forgiveness.

## FEBRUARY DEBATE RESULTS: Is cash on its way out?

33% YES 67% NO

Percentage reflects votes received by February 15, 2013.

#### JANUARY DEBATE RESULTS:

Is renting a home better than buying?

YES: 26% NO: 74%
Percentage reflects

Percentage reflects votes received by January 31, 2013.





See Dialogue pages for more debate responses

Opinions expressed are those of the individuals or organizations represented and are presented to foster discussion. Costco and *The Costco Connection* take no position on any Debate topic.

#### from an expert in the field:



**Ronald E. Riggio** is the Henry R. Kravis Professor of Leadership and Organizational Psychology at Claremont McKenna College, a blogger for *Psychology Today (www.psychologytoday.com/blog/cutting-edge-leader ship)* and author of a dozen books.

WHILE A FALLEN leader can certainly reform and do good, the position of leader—whether in gov-

ernment, business or elsewhere—comes with certain responsibilities. Foremost among those is to be a "good" leader. By that I mean a leader who is not only effective at achieving the goals of the group or organization that he or she leads, but a leader who also does the right thing.

Take the recent case of Lance Armstrong. He was a role model for many, and because of this he was able to raise millions of dollars toward a cure for cancer. Armstrong was found, however, to have won his races through cheating. While his charitable work has had an impact, it does not negate the abuse of his leadership position.

Armstrong is not alone. There are dozens of other high-profile leaders who lied or cheated to get ahead. Some, such as the executives at Enron, get caught, but many others get away with unethical behavior simply because they are effective in achieving goals, and that is the problem.

All too often, we confuse being an effective leader with being a good leader. A good leader

is one who accomplishes goals, but who also has good character.

What distinguishes good leaders from those who are merely effective?

First and foremost, good leaders do the right things versus simply getting things done. Good leaders are responsible and play by the rules. Good leaders treat people fairly, and don't lie, cheat or steal to get ahead.

Good leaders also don't achieve outcomes and leave followers exhausted, damaged or demoralized. Good leaders don't cause harm to achieve a goal. They should leave the organization and its followers better off than when they began.

The sport of cycling is not better off because of Lance Armstrong. His followers, and his sport, have been damaged. His charitable work does not compensate for the damage.

Leadership positions come with responsibilities. Among those are achieving goals and having a positive impact, but foremost is the responsibility to do good. Leaders lose their way when they begin to believe that the end justifies the means.

## Foster Farms. Locally grown. Certified by the American Humane Association.



For more than 20 years Costco shoppers have trusted Foster Farms for chicken that's locally raised, always natural, and always fresh. And today, Foster Farms fresh chicken is certified by the **American Humane Association**, the nation's oldest humane certification organization. The American Humane Certified seal is your guarantee that Foster Farms chicken has passed an independent audit evaluating diet, living conditions, and natural behaviors, more than 200 items in all. Foster Farms is proud to be American Humane Certified, because we believe goodness begins with the way a chicken is raised.





## Measuring performance

## **Key indicators of business success**

#### **By Don Sadler**

YOUR CAR'S DASHBOARD contains a number of gauges designed to alert you to potential engine or other problems with your vehicle. But did you know that similar gauges can alert you to potential problems in your business? These gauges are sometimes referred to as key performance indicators, or KPIs.

"KPIs are measurements that quantify business objectives and support critical success factors," explains Arthur F. Rothberg, a Costco member and the managing director of CFO Edge LLC (www.cfoedge.com) in Los Angeles, a provider of outsourced financial services. "They make it possible to assess your business's performance and gauge its ultimate success."

"To reach your strategic goals, you need to define, measure and track the KPIs that make your business unique," adds John E. Oeltjen, a CPA and the director of risk advisory services for Mueller Prost PC in St. Louis (www.muellerprost.com). "No two organizations' KPIs will be exactly the same—you must define and interpret your company's KPIs relative to your goals and objectives."

#### **Specific and measurable**

The most important characteristics of KPIs are that they be specific and measurable, says Frank Coker, a Costco member and the CEO of Corelytics Inc. (www.corelytics.com) in Bellevue, Washington, creator of the Corelytics Financial Dashboard for small businesses. He adds, "And you have to be able to compare them to a benchmark, whether this is a previous performance period for your company or your industry peers."

There are two broad categories of KPIs: financial and non-financial. Financial KPIs

include such common metrics as your current ratio, debt-to-equity ratio, accounts payable days, days sales outstanding and inventory turnover. You should have measurable goals for these metrics, such as a 2:1 or less debt-to-equity ratio or four inventory turns per year.

"But you can't just look at these numbers in isolation," says Oeltjen. "You have to compare them from quarter to quarter or year to year and look for trends that can help improve financial management." For example, if days sales outstanding has improved from the same quarter a year ago, your receivables collections are probably improving, along with your cash flow.

Similarly, you could benchmark your company's numbers against your industry's average performance. For example, comparing your accounts receivable days to industry averages will tell you how well your collections efforts stack up against similar companies in your industry. The Risk Management Association's Annual Statement Studies\* includes detailed financial performance statistics broken out by North American Industry Classification System codes.

#### **Non-financial KPIs also important**

Non-financial KPIs can be just as useful as financial KPIs, if not more so, depending on your business and industry. "Outside the financial arena, there may not be clear and concise reporting on non-financial metrics," says Rothberg. "In such companies, a highlevel view of KPIs is often missing, which makes assigning responsibility and accountability for meeting business goals and objectives difficult, if not impossible."

What are some examples of non-financial KPIs? Most manufacturing companies closely monitor rejection rates due to failure to meet minimum quality-control standards, while many retail businesses measure the percentage of items sold that are returned. For a technology company that relies heavily on attracting and retaining the brightest minds in the industry, employee turnover is a key metric that may help determine success. And a marketing-driven company will want to keep a close eye on response and conversion rates for its marketing and advertising campaigns.

Coker says that deciding which KPIs are the most important ones to focus on can become overwhelming, often stopping business owners from even getting started. He notes, "In this case, start out by choosing just a few metrics that you and your managers agree are critical to your company's success, whether they are financial or non-financial, and concentrate on these."

Your CPA or an outsourced CFO services provider may be able to help you get started. "They can help you determine which KPIs will provide the clearest picture of your company relative to your goals," says Oeltjen.

"KPI tracking should be part of a monthly routine, and everyone on the team should be included in the process," says Coker. "When the whole team gets to see the performance picture, it's amazing what they can do in their everyday activities to move a business toward its goals."

Don Sadler (don@donsadlerwriter.com) is a freelance writer based in Atlanta who specializes in topics related to small business and finance.

#### MOUNT YOUR TV WITH SANUS SIMPLICITY™

#### Safe. Secure. Simple.

Our homes are a safe haven from the dangers of the outside world. Unfortunately, they also house a growing danger that we use every single day. Our TVs.

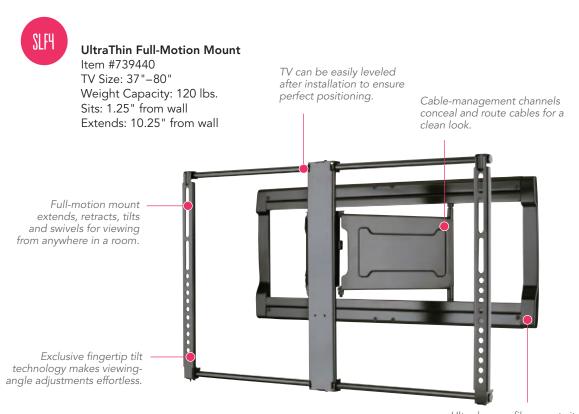
Accidental bumping can easily cause TVs to fall off furniture, which can lead to property damage, personal injury or even death. As the statistics below show, tipping TVs are a big problem.





#### EVERY FLAT-PANEL TV SHOULD BE SECURED

Mounting your flat-panel TV is the safest, most secure way to avoid injury. Our exceptional products offer unparalleled strength, stability and functionality to fit any need.



Ultra-low-profile mount sits just 1.25" from wall, maximizing the sleek, thin design of flat-panel TVs.





**UltraThin Full-Motion Mount** 

SMF?

Weight Capacity: 60 lbs. Sits: 1.7" from wall Extends: 15.8" from wall SXDP5

UltraThin Tilting Mount

TV Size: 32"-80" Weight Capacity: 125 lbs. Sits: 1" from wall Tilts: -10°



## Sharing secrets

#### Peer groups can help businesses get ahead

#### By Susan Hirshorn

HEARING MIKE KUKOL of Horizon Landscape & Irrigation Company talk about sharing his confidential business information with the owners of nine other landscaping companies, you might initially wonder if the owner of this Wyckoff, New Jersey, firm is a bit crazy.

Kukol and his fellow landscapers are members of a peer business adviser group, which is loosely defined as six to 12 business owners or executives who meet to discuss their companies' challenges. With the help of a trained facilitator, the participants share their successes and obstacles, giving them opportunities to learn from others who've had similar experiences.

Kukol says he isn't worried about spilling secrets to his competitors "because each member of my peer group operates in a different geographical market and we all signed agreements to the effect that what is said in the group stays in the group," he explains.

The reasons for joining a peer group are many. Beyond reducing the sense of isolation that often comes with being the boss, peer groups enable participants to share strategies that can increase profitability. Kukol says his group helped him boost profits during the economic downturn by showing him how to

better organize and interpret his financials and how to identify unprofitable areas that needed to be changed or eliminated.

"There's real support here—a kind of intimacy," says Kukol. "I remember one of the guys calling me at night to say that he thought I was making a mistake on an issue and that he wanted to make sure I corrected it. He did not have to do that, and he actually convinced me to make the change."

The right peer group can also open doors that might otherwise be shut, as Jeffrey Anderson, co-owner of Bulletproof Info Tech of Red Deer and Calgary, Alberta, discovered. He is part of a peer group of 12 information technology service firms, each from a different Canadian province or American state.

"In our field there are big players who get a lot of attention from vendors," says Anderson, a Costco member. "Our company is one of the smaller players—only 19 people right now. Getting the attention of some of those vendors can be easier if you're part of a peer group."

#### From Napoleon Hill to the Internet

In the quest for solutions to increasingly complex business challenges, Anderson and Kukol agree, peer groups are a valuable resource. However, they are not new. Modern peer groups evolved from the "mastermind group" concepts laid out in Napoleon Hill's classic book *Think and Grow Rich*, which was first published in 1937. Since then countless self-described mastermind and peer groups have emerged in business, professional, educational and social spheres.

Today's peer business advisory groups are usually put together by business associations or private consulting firms (see "Peering further"). They typically unite like-size companies, based on annual revenue, into different groups to keep the discussions relevant. Aided by the explosion in online communication, today's groups increasingly combine in-person meetings with email, secure Web video conferencing and cloud-based data-sharing platforms such as Dropbox or SharePoint.

But don't confuse those free (or nearly free) groups formed on social networks (such as LinkedIn) and industry discussion boards (such as Service Roundtable) with genuine peer business advisory groups. With peer groups, membership fees can range from several hundred to many thousands of dollars a year. Also, you must be voted in by group members and you get to know them personally. Social networks and discussion boards,



PHOTODISC

on the other hand, may be populated by thousands of folks you don't know.

#### What to consider before joining

Beyond the cost of membership, there are some key issues to consider before joining a peer business advisory group.

Which type? Peer groups fall into two broad categories: industry-specific (like Kukol's and Anderson's), where member companies come from the same field but operate in different geographical markets; and cross-industry, where members are in different, noncompeting fields.

With industry-specific groups, participants generally share similar business processes. A key advantage is that you can know how you compare with others in your field and learn how to close the performance gap. The geographical diversity of members isn't an obstacle to this; as Anderson explains, "Although a member in New York City may have a higher billing rate than one in Calgary, they also typically have higher expenses. So if we look at things on a percentage basis, such as gross profit as a percentage of revenue, our financials are very comparable."

Cross-industry groups typically comprise businesses from the same geographical region. Participants can give each other a better understanding of the local business environment, build up each other's local referral network and offer insights on shared issues. For example, the Canadian Association of Family Enterprise hosts peer groups that deal with such issues as transitioning leadership in a family-owned firm.

A good facilitator. A facilitator holds the key to creating a comfortable and informative environment. "He or she should stimulate discussion and keep it on track," says Jeffrey Scott, a Costco member in Trumbull, Connecticut, who serves as facilitator of Kukol's group. Scott employs a process he calls "peeling the onion." "This involves moving people beyond the knee-jerk responses and encouraging them to ask more questions to get at someone's underlying issue," he explains.

#### **Challenges and rewards**

Peer group participation is far from the touchy-feely stuff of talk shows. Prep work and attendance are required if you expect your peers to take you seriously. Accountability is part of the culture, as is being able to give and take constructive criticism.

Warns Kukol, "You have to defend your numbers and business practices to your peers. Sometimes it feels like answering to a board of directors and sometimes like being on the witness stand with nine prosecutors." But he is quick to emphasize that his peer group experience "made me think and act more like an owner and more professionally."

Anderson agrees, adding that when he and his peers first got together "everyone felt guarded-afraid of disclosing our secret sauce. After a while we realized that we've all got the same problems and most of us have the same secret sauce. Since joining the group we execute our plans more quickly."

Susan Hirshorn is a frequent contributor to The Connection.

#### **Peering further**



#### Industry-specific peer advisory organizations

- The Leader's Edge (landscaping) companies) www.jeffreyscott.biz/leadersedge.
- HTG Peer Groups (information technology service companies) www.htgpeergroups.com
- AgWeb (farmer peer groups) www.agweb.com

To locate groups in other industries, contact your professional or trade associations.

#### Cross-industry peer advisory organizations and business associations

- The Alternative Board thealternativeboard.com
- Vistage International (Vistage Connect) www.vistage.com
- The American Small Business Coalition www.theasbc.org
- Renaissance Executive Forums www.executiveforums.com
- The Chief Executive Officers' Clubs www.ceoclubs.org
- Women Presidents' Organization www.womenpresidentsorg.com
- Entrepreneurs' Organization www.eonetwork.org
- Northeastern University Center for Family Business (Massachusetts) www.cba.neu.edu/cfb/peer-groups
- The Conway Center for Family Business (central Ohio) www.familybusinesscenter.com
- The O.Berk Company Family **Business Forum (New Jersey)** view.fdu.edu/default.aspx?id=1218



Whitens
more than
3 shades
for a
noticeably
brighter
smile\*

\*Brushing twice daily for 4 weeks.
© 2013 Colgate-Palmolive Company

WAREHOUSE ONLY | AVAILABLE NOW Item #671032





## **Parchment Paper**



FOR RESULTS THAT STICK and PAPER THAT DOESN'T

A convenient way to bake, cook and prepare food with almost no cleanup. It is ideal for preparing chicken, fish, casseroles, eggs, nachos and more. Use en papillote (folded and sealed pouch) to boil and steam, or as a liner for baking.



Food preparation Oven cooking



Lining

Boiling

Exclusively from Costco Wholesale
WAREHOUSE ONLY | AVAILABLE NOW |
Item #587346



#### **GET YOUR SEASON STARTED EARLY.**

We now have charcoal in the warehouse.



#### Doesn't your skin deserve better care?



\*Even moisturizing body washes can strip essential nutrients. New, improved Dove® Body Wash is gentler.







Replenish vital moisture and revitalize dry and damaged hair with Nexxus® Therappe® Shampoo, Humectress® Conditioner and Deep Conditioning Treatment. NEXXUS.COM



## Finding a creative outlet through the art of craft of Control of C

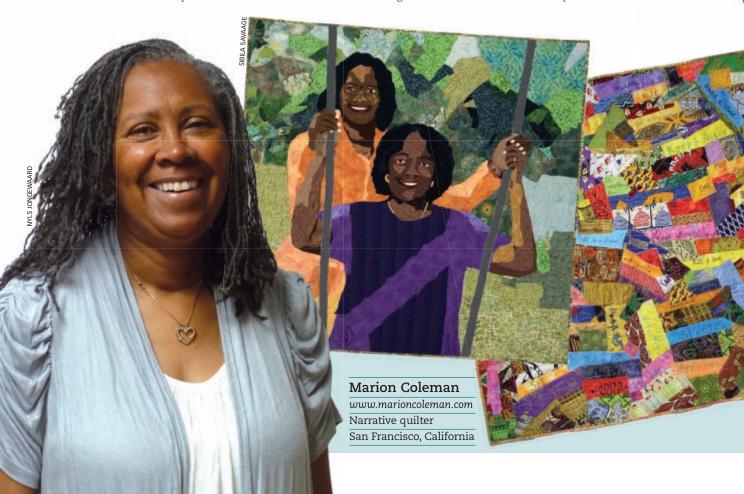
THE WORD "CRAFTS" conjures images of kitschy macramé plant hangers, balls of acrylic yarn in garish colors or dried-bean mosaics glued down in an elementary school art class. But to the millions of people in the U.S. who knit, sew, whittle, paint or stamp, crafting is anything but a throwback activity.

Research from the Craft & Hobby Association (CHA) found that people dabble (or dive) into crafts because it provides a creative outlet, offers a sense of accomplishment, promotes relaxation, provides a challenge and serves as a way to learn something new. The CHA also found that more than half of all households have at least one member who crafts. Whether it's a passion for—or a byproduct of—creating something from raw materials, crafting can serve as a form of communication, help foster a sense of community, provide an outlet for charitable work and preserve traditional art forms.

Ryan Jones, editor of *The Crafts Report*, says that when the economy went bad and people lost their jobs, many turned to their hobbies as a way to supplement their income. Some have done so by setting up booths at holiday bazaars and local markets. Some have ventured online with their own websites, while others tested the waters by setting up shop on e-commerce websites such as Etsy.com, which specializes in handmade and vintage items.

According to the CHA, this had led to a \$30 billion industry in the U.S. for the businesses that make and sell craft supplies.

Regardless of the reason they're driven to create, the Costco members profiled here have found satisfaction—and in some cases financial success—by making things with their own hands.—Stephanie E. Ponder





AS THE DAUGHTER of an artist, Kimberly Arden says there was never any question she'd be an artist too. It just took her a while to find the right medium.

Arden worked with fabrics, taught painting and made dolls. Then, while she was attending a sewing convention in the late 1980s, she explains, "I came across a woman making buttons with polymer [clay]. Basically I stalked her for three days—in a friendly way. I was trying to learn as much as I could from her."

Arden says her "mind was blown" by the intricate and colorful designs.

When she got home she made her first cane, a log of clay with a design running through it. Canes are created by combining sheets

or rods of clay to make patterns or images. When the cane is sliced, the image or pattern is revealed. Even though the effect is created by using colored clay, Arden says people still ask at what point she paints her jewelry.

"It's kept my attention for more than 25 years," says Arden, who went on to teach polymer clay classes for 15 years without once repeating a project. "I'm always getting better; it still challenges me. I can't imagine living without it."

Arden has made her sole income from her art since the mid-'90s. She and her husband spend their winters in Florida, while their summers are spent living the life of what she calls "a glorified gypsy." The couple travel to fine-art shows in Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Texas and Florida, selling her jewelry for \$24 to \$375. She likes to joke that her husband is her company's CEO: "Carry Everything Out."

Clay, she says, is a "fantastic, colorful medium that I would eat if I could. I love this stuff! The drive to create is just as strong as ever, and I still put my heart into each piece."—SEP

clothes that fit, she mostly made her own clothing. It took a visit with an aunt, also a quilter, for Coleman to realize, "you know, I think I can do this."

Around the same time, about 20 years ago, technology evolved to allow quilters to print photos on fabric, and African-print fabrics became readily available. Coleman also left her job as a social work counselor to home-school her son and a nephew. She used her afternoons for sewing and began using fabric, photos, vintage clothing and other nontraditional materials to tell stories.

"I have more ideas than I'll ever be able to get done," she says.

In the 10 years since she made the quilt about York, she's made quilts that have served as public art in her community and nearby towns. They've also been displayed in places such as the Quilters Hall of Fame in Indiana and as part of an exhibit in Yokohama, Japan. She also teaches incarcerated boys and girls how to quilt, holds classes at the local library and community centers and has been featured in *O* magazine.

"Every quilt tells a story," says Coleman, speaking of everything from traditional log-cabin quilts to crazy quilts made by assembling fabric scraps in random ways. She adds that quilters stitch together bits and pieces, "so other generations can know where we've been and maybe where we're going."—SEP



#### Paper cuts •

#### Yreina Flores Ortiz

www.aymujershop.com

Paper cutter

Indio, California

ONE DAY, WHILE PLAYING with paper and scissors, Yreina Flores Ortiz noticed that the snowflake she had made resembled the beautiful banners she had seen at religious and social events in the Mexican-American community where she was raised. Instantly, she began making her own banners.

Now she is the owner—and chief artist of Ay Mujer, a business that sells banners and other varieties of *papel picado*, as this traditional Mexican art is known. (The term literally means "embroidered paper.") Business has been so successful that she was recently able to hire her brother and her husband. Among her most famous clients are *Martha Stewart Weddings* magazine and the Food Network's *Giada at Home*, hosted by Giada De Laurentiis.

To make a design, Ortiz first draws a pattern by hand. The patterns are extraordinarily intricate. "I like them to look like lace from far away," she says. She then lays it over a stack of perhaps 15 sheets of tissue paper and cuts through the papers by hand. Mexican artists traditionally used chisels, which Ortiz does on occasion, but she prefers to use an X-Acto knife, which allows her more artistic freedom.

Ortiz, who lives with her husband and two children in her hometown of Indio, California, is grateful to her own parents for two reasons. First, they didn't own a television, which forced her to spend her time more creatively, and second, they named her after a Latino artist friend, which Ortiz believes in some way must have inspired her.

She is proud that her work is original. She says, "I really respect traditional artists in Mexico who make this, so I don't copy any of their designs. Just because you're in another country doesn't mean the design didn't originate with someone." She also enjoys introducing her work into new and different markets. About 30 percent of her sales go to Australia. She has no idea why, but says, "It's wonderful. It's exciting."—Fran Schumer



#### **Connecting**

Here are a few resources for information on crafts' role in our culture and how to succeed as a crafter.

American Craft Council
www.craftcouncil.org
Nonprofit organization
dedicated to championing

contemporary American craft.

Craft and Hobby Association www.craftandhobby.org
International nonprofit trade organization for member companies engaged in the design, manufacture, distribution and retail sales of products in the

The Crafts Report

craft and hobby industry.

www.craftsreport.com
Monthly magazine for crafts
professionals. Articles and regular columns cover everything
from how to photograph handmade goods to industry trends.

#### **Arts Business Institute**

www.artsbusinessinstitute.org This nonprofit provides education about product design, booth display, event marketing and more for art- and craftmaking communities.

#### **Craft in America**

www.craftinamerica.org
Nonprofit organization
dedicated to the exploration,
preservation and celebration
of craft and its impact on
the nation's cultural heritage.
Located in Los Angeles, it
hosts exhibitions and events
and has a research library.



#### A better sweater

A NOSE-TO-NOSE encounter with an alpaca in 2007 led Mary Ellen Perry down the proverbial rabbit hole. First she fell in love with alpaca yarn, which is, she says, "warmer than wool and softer than cashmere." Then she visited an alpaca farm, where she fell in love with the gentle animals. She spent the next two years learning everything she could about alpacas and asked herself, "If you had the opportunity to [have alpacas], what would you do with it?"

At that point she'd learned enough to know that the money lies in breeding. So when her husband inherited a farm in Indiana in 2009, they left their North Carolina home and the self-described city girl fenced off two acres and bought a herd of 11 alpacas—a female for breeding and 10 "fiber boys." Perry, a registered nurse, learned to knit before she turned 10, so it didn't take long for her to learn that her passion lay in the fiber. "I have to knit," she says, citing the calming nature of her hobby. "I can almost feel my blood pressure drop when I sit down."

To educate herself on producing the fiber she loves, Perry immersed herself in classes and joined several local and national alpaca associations. After learning that the U.S. has only three facilities for cleaning natural fibers, she set out to help create American-based machinery that cleans alpaca wool. Produced by Elegant Fibers, a company owned by three alpaca farmers, the machinery will be made in Indiana with 100 percent U.S. parts and labor. With her strong connections throughout the alpaca industry, Perry is serving as a sales representative for the Elegant Fibers Scour Machine. The prototype is nearly ready, with the finished machinery scheduled for completion by late spring.

"The more steps you can control, the better quality control you'll have," says Perry. "From the farm to the end product—both for the cottage industry and the commercial world—I am working to promote this wonderful fiber."—SEP



### **Crafty getaways**

**Art and Soul Retreats** *www.artandsoulretreat.com*Multi-day retreats offer workshops in collage, jewelry, fiber arts, journaling, painting, art dolls, sculpture, altered books and more.

**Art Camp for Women** www.artcampforwomen.com
This art camp for grown-ups takes place in the Colorado Rocky Mountains and offers leading-edge classes covering a variety of techniques.

Art is You www.art-is-you.com

Mixed-media retreats designed to replenish personal creative resources as well at the artist's spirit.

Art Unraveled http://artunraveled.com

Week of workshops covering mixed media, jewelry, art books and more.

Traveling Together, Inc. www.travelingtogether.net

Tours for quilters, miniature-dollhouse collectors and more. They arrange tours for Vogue Knitting and with knitting celebrities, such as Nicky Epstein.





#### Richie and Jane Spencer

www.groovygarbage.com

Upcycling artist

Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

RICHIE AND JANE SPENCER were enamored of "upcycling," the process of converting waste materials into useful products, long before it was a popular

trend. So when Richie, who works as a radiology technologist, noticed a handbag made from a recycled rubber inner tube years ago, he saw not only a clever and practical idea someone had come up with, but a concept that impressed him.

"I have always been a creative person," says Richie. "I have designed and made beaded jewelry for years. So, once I saw that handbag, I got ahold of a large rubber inner tube from a tractor tire, cleaned it and started experimenting with different handbag designs.

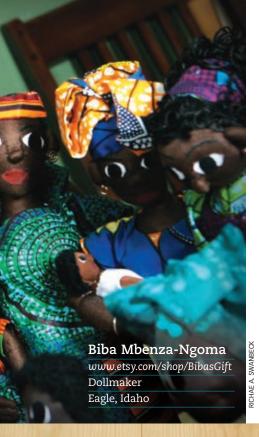
"I learned every skill I use with Groovy Garbage on my own. As things progressed, it became a part-time home-based small business," he adds.

Groovy Garbage sells items made from old inner tubes, recycled vinyl banners and salvaged fabric from beach chairs and umbrellas. In the Spencers' Etsy store (www.etsy.com/shop/groovygarbage), which is where the bulk of their sales take place, shoppers can find a range of items that cost between \$12 and \$85.

Today, Groovy Garbage has become a bit more than a hobby for both Richie and Jane, who works as a dental hygienist. "It is sometimes very difficult to juggle all the balls: Making and designing the product[s], managing the Etsy shop, keeping up with our social networking on Facebook and Twitter," Richie says. "It requires a good bit of time management and working late nights and weekends, but this is what we love and we believe in the green gospel: What goes around, comes around."—Will Fifield

#### **The Costco Connection**

Costco warehouses and Costco.com carry basic art supplies along with office and mailing supplies. Costco also offers members services such as website hosting and credit card processing.



## •Hello doll-y

WHEN BIBA MBENZA-NGOMA was a child, she and her friends played with white-skinned European dolls, the only kind available in the Democratic Republic of Congo. "We loved these dolls, but in our hearts, we wanted to play with dolls that looked like us," says Mbenza-Ngoma. Working with black and brown scraps of whatever leftover fabric they could find, she and her friends made dolls that they stored in shoe boxes under their beds and treasured.

Now, 40 years later, Mbenza-Ngoma makes an array of dark-skinned dolls that she sells at craft shows and online. The dolls are between 14 and 16 inches tall, and are dressed in African fabrics that are peacock blue, persimmon orange, jade green and other vibrant colors. Biba's Gift, as her collection is known, includes male and female dolls, dancing dolls and dolls that are part of a family (customers can order them in groups to match their own families or to represent particular familial relationships).

Between her youthful hobby and her current business lay a journey of many miles. Before settling down in Idaho (for a marriage that has since ended), Mbenza-Ngoma lived in Belgium and Massachusetts. After her three children were born, she began making dolls for them—and didn't stop. "Doll-making became my therapy," she says. In 2010, she brought her collection to share with her son's fourth-grade class. The students, boys and girls alike, were so delighted that she found herself besieged with requests for dolls, which she happily fulfilled—free.

Since then, Mbenza-Ngoma has become much more practical. She sells her dolls, each of which takes her between 10 and 25 hours to create, for about \$35 for a single doll to \$180 for a group of dolls. Making them, however, is about more than business. "My greatest joy is seeing people's reactions when they see my dolls. [It's] usually laughter, but sometimes silence, because the dolls stir up memories," she says. "That's why I call my collection Biba's Gift: The dolls are a gift to them, and a gift to me."—FS

## Wonders of wood o

FRANK COPPOLA TOILED and tinkered in his TV repair shop for 25 years. When he retired at age 62, "I had to keep myself doing something," he says.

He decided to spend more time doing carpentry, a hobby he'd always enjoyed in his spare time. Coppola battled many health issues, including cancer and several heart operations, but never let his health get in the way of doing what he loved to do.

"I did heavier stuff before, like gazebos, bars, fireplace mantels, stuff like that," he recalls. "But I had to tone down because, age-wise, I couldn't pick up heavy stuff. I didn't want my health to interfere with what I want to do, so I do smaller stuff."

He found enjoyment and creative fulfillment in building birdhouses and mailboxes fashioned after real houses.

It started as a hobby, then shifted into a business. "My daughter got me involved with Etsy," Coppola says. "That's a fantastic site. Anything you really want, you can go on Etsy and you can find stuff homemade."

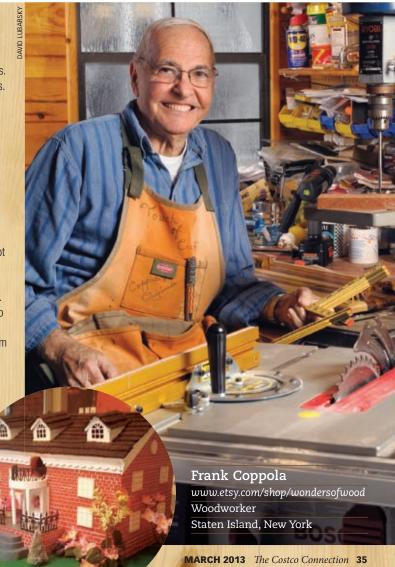
Orders came in from all over, but, interestingly, not so much locally.

"[In] New York, Staten Island is a hard sell," Coppola remarks. "Who wants stuff homemade? They'd rather go to the stores and buy it. I get more orders from [Seattle], Connecticut, Vermont. I get more orders from places like that than from New York."

Coppola is mostly self-taught. He had to leave high school to go to work to help his family, and served in the Army in Korea. Last spring, the New York State Department of Veterans Affairs awarded him, and several other veterans around his age, their high school diplomas. He then enrolled in college drawing classes for fun and to further develop his art skills.

Coppola spends about 20 hours a week at his craft and says, "I try to keep myself involved. More older fellers should get involved and enjoy what they're doing."

When told that *Connection* readers often follow up on stories, he says, "So you may bring me more business? Fantastic! I'll get the machine oiled up." —*Steve Fisher* 



PAID ADVERTISEMENT

# Eggstra Special

Celebrate Easter with value and quality from Costco and let us help put all your eggs in one basket. ▲ VeggieTales 'Twas the Night Before Easter and An Easter Carol DVD 2-Pack: Colorful characters discover the true meaning of Easter and what helping others is really all about in these two Easter-inspired tales. Item #734882. Warehouse only.





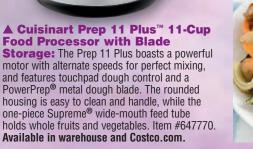
**∢** Kirkland Signature<sup>™</sup> Jelly Belly<sup>®</sup> Jelly Beans:

Pick up a 4-pound jar of Kirkland Signature Jelly Belly® Jelly Beans to add color, fun and gourmet flavors to your Easter celebrations! Item #12173. Warehouse only.





▼ Kirkland Signature Australian Boneless Leg of Lamb: Perfect for your Easter entrée or dinner centerpiece, this boneless leg of lamb is all natural, pasture raised and free of artificial additives and growth hormones. Item #27801. Warehouse only



▲ Cuisinart Brew Central®
14-Cup Programmable Coffee
Maker: With a brushed metal finish and an
elegant tech-industrial design, this coffee maker
is fully automatic from start to finish, with
24-hour programmability. Item #656000.
Available in warehouse and Costco.com.



# Digital editions mean more content

For those reading the digital editions of *The Connection*, select print articles and ads are enhanced by the addition of video clips or other digital content.

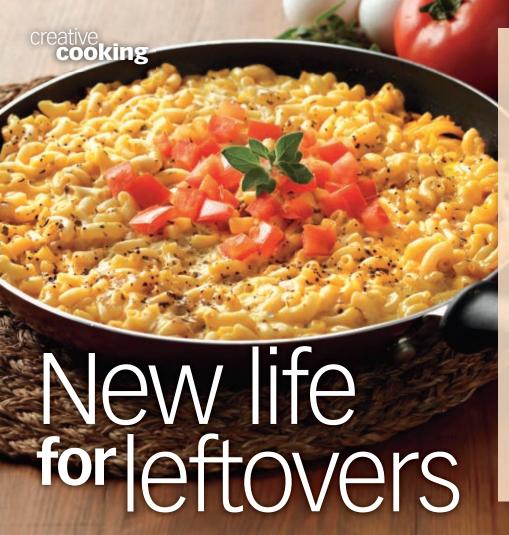
Editorial articles in the print edition tagged with the indicator shown at right above indicate that a video or other enhancement is available in the digital editions.

Ads with added material, such as demonstrations or testimonials, display a universal "play" button like the one above left, along with directions to look for a video clip in the digital editions.

#### Finding the digital editions of The Connection

The *Online Edition* is a Web browser digital edition and can be accessed by all computers with an Internet connection at *www.costcoconnection.com* or through links on Costco.com.

The *Newsstand Edition* is a mobile app edition of *The Connection* for Apple and Android smartphones and tablets. It can be downloaded from the iTunes or Google Play app stores. (Apple users can sign up for 12 issues of the *Newsstand Edition* and will be notified when each new issue becomes available.)



#### Mac 'n' Cheese Frittata

Here's a tasty reason to make extra macaroni and cheese. You can also substitute any plain leftover pasta.

4 eggs

1 tablespoon dried oregano or basil

Pinch of cayenne pepper

Salt and pepper to taste

- 4 cups leftover cooked macaroni and cheese
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tomato, finely chopped (optional)

In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs and the seasonings. Add the macaroni and cheese, and mix well. Heat the olive oil in a medium to large nonstick skillet over medium heat. When it's hot, pour the mixture into the skillet, gently leveling it out with a spatula or wooden spoon. Reduce the heat to low, sprinkle with the (optional) chopped tomato and continue to cook until firm and brown on the bottom. Season with additional salt and pepper. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

Note: If the mac and cheese has been refrigerated, allow to come to room temperature first. If time is an issue, microwave on low power about 2 minutes until warm to touch. This dish can also be made in the oven in a heatproof skillet or baking dish. Cover loosely with foil and bake at 300 F for 20 minutes.

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS: IRIDIO PHOTOGRAPHY

## How to make the most of meals

#### **By Georgia Orcutt**

LAST NIGHT'S DINNER, re-served as tonight's meal, can inspire jokes. Writer Calvin Trillin recalls, "The most remarkable thing about my mother is that for 30 years she served our family nothing but leftovers. The original meal has never been found."

Yet, in fact, you can feed yourself and your family and friends tasty, nourishing meals by creatively and wisely using up every smidgeon of the food you buy, including left-overs and maturing produce. You'll join a growing number of busy, smart, budget-savvy home cooks who deliberately count on left-overs to stretch their food dollars while providing quick weekday meals.

Wean yourself from recipes and begin to experiment. Use up what's in front of you. Get into the habit of rescuing tired, about-tosprout potatoes and other vegetables by roast-

#### The Costco Connection

You'll find everything you need to make great meals—and leftovers—along with food storage solutions at Costco warehouses. FoodSavers are also available on Costco.com and at most warehouses.

These websites offer further guidelines for safe home food storage and use:

- http://frugalliving.about.com Search "shelf life"
- www.foodsafety.gov Search "food storage"
- www.fsis.usda.gov/ Search "food product dating"

ing them in the oven to serve hot as a side dish, or enjoy them cold in wraps or salads. Plan to serve rice or other grains as a side dish one night, then use leftovers for vegetable fried rice or salad another night. (Cook more grains than you need and freeze them; reheat in the microwave.) Chop an entire bunch of fresh herbs at one go and use within two days or freeze: Add them to eggs, a soup, a salad and blend some with olive oil and vinegar to make a dressing.

Keep your kitchen stocked with basics—dried herbs and spices, nuts and seeds, canned

tomatoes, canned beans, tuna, soups and broths, olive oil, olives, tapenade, mustard, flavored vinegar, capers, soy sauce, eggs, cheese and yogurt—to help you repurpose and add bright, fresh flavor and appealing texture to your leftovers. Keep quick-cooking frozen veggies on hand to give nutritious color and great flavor to leftover grains, pastas, soups and stews.

### Taking leftovers to a whole new level

Nancy Gershman and Marlene Samuels, divas of deliberate leftovers, offer helpful advice and tasty recipes on their website, Expendable Edibles (www.expendableedibles.com), which features a community cookbook focused on curbing food waste. Gershman and Samuels met in Chicago several decades ago as mothers of young children, and soon found they shared a deep-seated belief, which their parents had instilled in them, that food should never, ever be wasted.

Tackling leftovers with passion and purpose, they address six main categories of foods that tend to be overlooked or neglected in a typical home kitchen (Stems, Skins & Stalks;



Past Peak; Once Cooked: Negligible Quantities; Nearly Expired; Ill-Fated Creations; and Thanksgiving Leftovers) and offer dozens of clever tips and tested tricks for including them in delicious daily meals. They present creative gourmet treatments for everything from "past peak" vegetables to bulk buys, putting a premium on great flavor and appealing texture. In fact, they've developed enough creative ideas to fill a book: An Expendable Edibles cookbook is on the horizon.

#### **Use every bite**

Here's how the Expendable Edibles team makes good use of several favorites from Costco.

**Olives:** Serve as an appetizer. Slice and use in salads or add to pasta sauces. Blend with garlic and olive oil to make tapenade, a spread for sandwiches and wraps or a sauce for pasta.

**Nuts:** Eat a handful as a snack. Chop and add to salads, rice and grain dishes, or sprinkle on cooked vegetables to add texture.

**Pesto:** Toss with hot cooked pasta or rice. Use leftovers to season cooked potatoes or as a topping for cooked fish, or add a few tablespoons of olive oil to make your own salad dressing. Use as a spread for sandwiches and wraps.

Salsa: Set out a bowl with chips. Add leftovers to tomato sauces, or stir into rice or beans. Use 1 cup as a base for soups or chicken stew. 

■

Georgia Orcutt is the author of How to Feed a Teenage Boy (Ten Speed Press, 2007) and the Cooking USA series (Chronicle Books). She is a program manager for Oldways, a nonprofit in Boston dedicated to changing the way people eat.

#### **Potato Salad Soup**

Serve hot, topped with chives or scallions, or serve cold, topped with parsley, grilled shrimp, crumbled feta or a dollop of guacamole.

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion or 2 small onions (preferably not too sweet), peeled and coarsely chopped
- 3 or 4 celery stalks, peeled and coarsely chopped ½ cup dry white wine
- 8 cups chicken stock
- 4 to 6 cups American-style potato salad 2 bay leaves

In a large stockpot, heat the olive oil. Add the onion and sauté until soft but not brown. Add the celery and sauté for 2 to 3 more minutes. Add the wine, increase the heat to high and bring to a boil. Add the stock and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Fold in the potato salad. Cook for 2 to 3 more minutes on medium, mix well, add the bay leaves and cook on low for 1 hour. Remove bay leaves and garnish with red pepper flakes or celery leaves. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

**Note:** To serve soup as a bisque, turn off heat and purée until smooth either in a food processor or with an immersion blender. Return to low heat and whisk in 1/2 cup plain Greek yogurt.

#### **Roasted Root Vegetables**

Use up carrots, beets, potatoes, parsnips and other vegetables. Be creative! Consider cut purple onions, sliced celery, garlic, even cherry tomatoes. Vary the seasonings as well: ground cumin and curry powder, a pinch of ground cinnamon, a sprinkle of white pepper and sea salt—lend exotic flavor.

- 6 cups any root vegetable(s), peeled and cut into pieces
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon dried thyme, oregano, marjoram, dill or any other herbs you have on hand
- Salt and pepper to taste (sea salt is especially great!)

Heat the oven to 350 F. Arrange the vegetables in a shallow ovenproof glass dish or casserole. Sprinkle with olive oil and toss to coat. Sprinkle with the herbs, season with salt and pepper.

Bake, uncovered, for 30 to 40 minutes, or until the hardest of the vegetables (usually beets or parsnips) is tender when a knife is inserted. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

**Note:** If including garlic, don't separate the cloves. Instead, cut the intact head in half through the "equator," brush each half generously with olive oil, sprinkle with salt and roast with the other vegetables.





### SCOTTS TURF BUILDER GRASS SEED

# GREENER GRASS GUARANHEEDH



## With WaterSmart® Plus **Coating Technology!**



Absorbs 2x more water\*



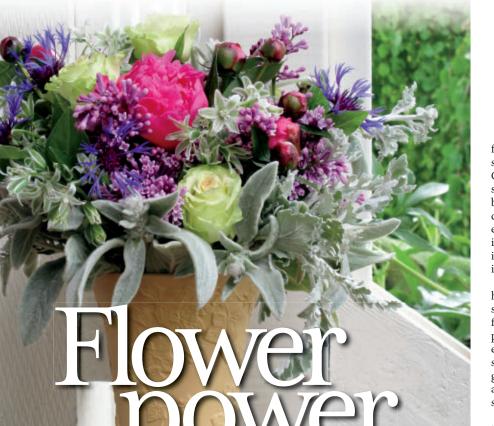
Feeds to jumpstart growth



**Protects** against disease

\* Than uncoated seed

See digital editions for video.



Bringing outdoor

beauty inside

#### By Debra Prinzing

ANYONE WHO HAS received or given flowers knows that a bouquet will put a smile on your face in an instant. What seems like common sense has even been confirmed by the academic world. According to behavioral research conducted at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, the presence of flowers triggers happy emotions, heightens feelings of life satisfaction and affects social behavior in a positive manner far beyond what is normally believed. When the university's social scientists explored the link between flowers and life satisfaction, they found that flowers are a natural and healthful moderator of moods.

If you need some mood-enhancing floral therapy—and who doesn't?—this is the perfect time of year to plant perennials and shrubs with attractive flowers and foliage. If your space is limited or if you aren't a gardener, you can still appreciate nature's abundance in your home by combining greenery with cut blooms.

Backyard bouquets. The age-old prac-

tice of picking and arranging flowers in a vase was popularized by the Victorians, but now, according to many gardening experts, cutting gardens are returning to the domestic landscape.

"As I travel the world in search of new plant breeds, I've noticed cutting gardens are coming back," says Anthony Tesselaar, cofounder and president of Tesselaar Plants, with U.S. offices in Lawndale, California. "I've noticed that Europe tends to be a bit ahead of the U.S. in terms of garden trends, and, based on what I've seen there, I suspect cutting gardens will begin to gain momentum here in the U.S. once again."

A recent survey by the National Gardening Association (NGA) suggests 10.8 million households in the U.S. buy flower seeds (along with vegetable seeds) annually. And, according to NGA research director Bruce Butterfield, "34 million households—nearly one in three U.S. households—have a flower garden." That's a lot of flower power.

> "I think the cost savings, self-expression and powerful connection to interior design's popularity in the media make cutting gardens a coming trend," says Miriam Goldberger, president and co-founder of Wild-



flower Farm, a wildflowerseed producer based in Coldwater, Ontario. "I myself have been absolutely besotted with cutting gardens for 25 years. I love the endless amount of creativity it gives me, and the way it helps me bring nature inside my home."



smartphone? Get tips on floral arrangements in our digital newsstand and online editions.

Flowers in the landscape. Flowers in the home shouldn't be reserved for special occasions alone. Head outdoors to find ingredients for a freshly picked bouquet. Shrubs and perennials from the garden offer a creative palette of design choices. Look for classic favorites such as forsythia, red-twig dogwood, hydrangeas, peonies, lilies and dahlias, beginning now and continuing through the entire growing season; all are perfect vase ingredients.

When you clip blooms and greenery from the garden, use clean, sharp pruners and plunge the cut stems into a bucket of roomtemperature water until you're ready to start arranging. Extend a bouquet's vase life by stripping off any leaves that will be in water. And keep things fresh by changing the vase water every few days.

Mix and match. Gardeners and foodies have embraced the seasonal aspects of what they grow, cook and eat. But depending on where you live, it might be a challenge to enjoy seasonal flowers all year long. That's when everyday garden foliage can be a useful addition to a mixed bouquet or a single bunch of blooms.

You can stretch the potential of the bunch you buy and make it more local with cuttings from your garden, says Susy Wingate, owner of Wingate Interiors on Bainbridge Island, Washington. Wingate begins with a large bouquet of roses and regroups them, using foliage and other flowers to create even more arrangements. "Use your imagination," she suggests. "Figure five roses per vase-you always want to use odd numbers of stemsand add greens [and other flowers] to create multiple bouquets."

Bring springtime indoors with fresh flowers and garden cuttings: It's an easy way to celebrate the season. Simply gather a cheery bouquet to enjoy on your desk or create a lavish centerpiece for your next dinner party. Either way, there is a flower option that will express your sentiments and alter the moment's mood. Channel your inner floral artist and create a bouquet that reflects you, the occasion and your personal style.

Costco member Debra Prinzing (www.debra prinzing.com) is a Seattle-based outdoor-living expert and author.

#### The Costco Connection

Look for Rainforest Alliance-certified roses, plus garden bunches, mixed bouquets with gerbera daisies, tulips, alstroemerias and carnations, as well as shrubs and perennials ready for planting, bagged bulbs and perennial assortments in Costco warehouses. Visit Costco.com for plants, special-occasion floral arrangements, bulk flowers and overnight delivery.





## Convertible Bench

Easy Conversion from Bench to Table The Beauty of Wood Without the Maintenance

WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM



## 6-Foot Picnic Table

Seats up to Eight Folds Flat for Easy Storage

WAREHOUSE ONLY



#### Adirondack Chair

UV-Protected Simulated Wood Classic Comfortable Design

**WAREHOUSE ONLY** 



#### Dual Composter

(2) 50-Gallon (189.3 L) Tumblers Designed for Easy Composting

**WAREHOUSE ONLY** 





WELL-GROOMED GARDENS have tremendous curb appeal. They welcome visitors and encourage homeowners to get outside and enjoy their surroundings. But when spring hits, the garden-prep to-do list can seem overwhelming. If you take a step-by-step approach to readying your garden, you'll be sitting on your deck with a book in one hand and a drink in the other in no time at all.

Start by assessing the impact of winter. Check your natural elements (garden beds, trees, shrubs) and man-made structures (fences, arbors, water features, compost bins). Note any damage or dead plants, wear and tear, and any areas that need attention. Inventory garden tools, hoses and sprinklers to see what needs to be cleaned or replaced.

Do a "big picture" spring cleanup. Remove winter debris such as downed branches and leaves, and any trash or debris that has blown in. When the ground has thawed and the lawn is dry, lightly rake it with a leaf rake (not a metal-pronged rake), removing loose debris and looking for damage.

Set aside time to clean tools. Make sure shears and secateurs are sharpened so you're ready to prune.

*Prune.* Deciduous trees and shrubs prefer to be pruned when they're dormant (late winter–early spring), and it's easier to see the branch structure then too. Flowering trees and shrubs such as forsythia, weigela, bridal wreath spirea and lilac should be cut back after flowering, advises Cass Turnbull, author









of *Cass Turnbull's Guide to Pruning* (Sasquatch Books, 2005) and founder of PlantAmnesty. But if a branch, vine or shrub is damaged or blocking windows or entranceways, prune it now regardless of its type.

Check for dead or weak tree branches. Arrange to have them removed if you can't do it yourself. Thin out and shape ornamentals that bloom in summer or fall. Remove dead flower heads and stake any floppy plants.

Mulch. An annual application of coarsetextured organic mulch keeps weeds down and maintains good garden soil and healthy plants, says Costco member Christina Pfeiffer, a Seattle-area horticulture consultant and coauthor of Month-by-Month Gardening in Washington & Oregon (Cool Springs Press, 2006).

Weed. Start weeding in early spring when weeds are small and before they flower and go to seed. Immediately cover the bare ground with 3 to 4 inches of coarse mulch (composted leaves, wood chips or coarse compost are good choices). Don't bury the base of the plants, as that can encourage rot, Pfeiffer says. Mulching discourages additional weeds, conserves moisture, enriches the soil and gives a neater, more finished appearance to garden beds.

*Edge.* Once weeds are banished, spend some time edging those beds. Crisp edges prevent grass invasion and make garden beds look well groomed, no matter how jumbled the plants.

Add color. Colorful annuals are an inexpensive way to add bursts of color throughout the growing season. Grouping potted annuals near your entrance makes it easy to replace spring annuals, such as primulas or pansies, with summer bloomers, such as marigolds and geraniums, as the weather warms. Plant a few additional pots to strategically place in garden beds as the season progresses and perennials die back.

Finally, give yourself a pat on the back and hire a lawn-care professional for just a couple of weeks in spring to do some initial mowing and basic fertilizing. It'll make your ongoing maintenance much easier, which will leave you more time to enjoy your clean garden.

Laura Langston gardens on Vancouver Island, B.C., where spring comes so early she sometimes starts cleaning her garden before the holiday decorations are put away.

#### **The Costco Connection**

Members will find pruners, hoses, sprinklers, composters, fertilizer, rain barrels, plants and more at Costco and on Costco.com.









With a natural color palette and a stylish design, this 6-Piece Woven Seating Group will coordinate with almost any outdoor décor. The all-weather wicker is resistant to fading, stains, mildew and stretching while the Sunbrella® fabric cushions are resistant to mildew, stains, chlorine and fading. The coffee table features a glazed clay tile top. And the no-rust, aluminum construction makes this a seating group that will last. Some assemby required. For outdoor use only.

Accessories not included.

WAREHOUSE ONLY | AVAILABLE NOW Item #639542

#### **ENDURING COLOR**

UV resistant: Colors stay strong & vibrant under intense sunlight Bleach cleanable Chlorine resistant

#### **SUMPTUOUS HAND**

Sunbrella® fabrics are soft, inviting & durable

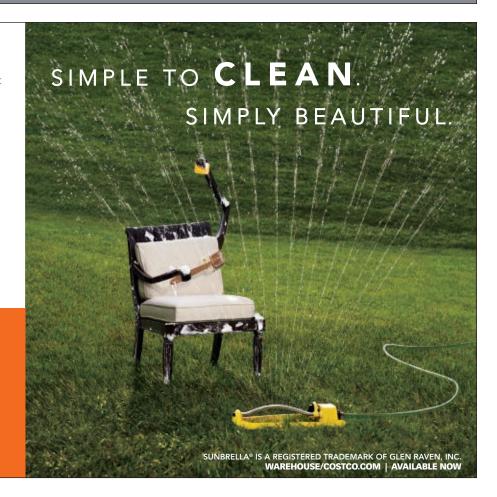
#### **WORRY FREE**

Stain resistant UV resistant Mildew resistant

#### **5-YEAR LIMITED WARRANTY**

www.sunbrella.com





## Buyer's DICK Kevin Gleason

Kevin Gleason Costco Buyer Lawn and Garden

CONTRARY TO WHAT you might think, March is not too early to begin focusing on grills. Even if I weren't the buyer for this department, as a barbecue lover I'd still be

That's why I'm particularly excited about the KitchenAid gas grill (Item #674048)

that we're bringing in this year. Costco has bucked the industry trend of using lower-quality stainless steel, and has put together a grill that

thinking about them year-round.

many seasons to come.

Cheap light-gauge
burners and grids made of
lower-quality stainless steel

should last for



rust and corrode more quickly than good-quality burners and grids. The Costco KitchenAid grill uses AISI 304 stainless steel—the best commonly available commercial-grade stainless steel—for the lid, cooking grids and 1.2-mm-thick burners, as well as the control panels and doors. Additionally, the steel firebox and fire tamers are porcelain enameled. All of these elements work together to distribute consistent heat across the entire cooking surface and reduce flare-ups. Additional features include a pull-out tank tray, heavy-duty casters and

an oversize, easy-to-read temperature gauge.

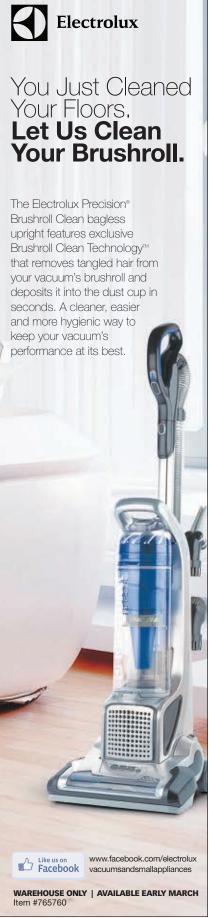
The Costco price is as impressive as well: \$599.99

in all locations with the exception of Alaska (\$659.99); Hawaii (\$689.99);

Puerto Rico (\$639.99) and Costco.com,(\$729.99, delivered). This represents at least a 10 percent value over retail.



0



# Winner takes the pot The winners of the 2012 Costco Container Contest

UBMISSIONS to the 2012 container contest numbered in the hundreds, and put the expertise of Costco's lawn and garden buying team to the test. Awards were given in five categories:

Flowers, Edibles, Combination, Succulents and Creative Containers. Each winner was awarded a \$250 Costco Cash card.

−*T. Foster Jones* 



Flowers
Cindy Young
Dublin, California

Edibles
Ilona McHugh
Oakland, California

# Category: Flowers Cindy Young Dublin, California

were very impressed and

I LOVE WINDOW boxes and always had it on my "to do" list to try to have one in the yard. A dear gardening friend made me the mirror window and I attached a planter box. I carefully selected the flowers for an almost full sun exposure and planted them. I have never given anything so much TLC in the yard. I babysat this planter with water and fertilizer like I had never done before with a plant. I was so anxious for it to grow and be just like I had always envisioned in my mind. People

couldn't believe that it was my first time to do it. I have to say that I am humbly impressed myself that I did it! It really is my pride and joy in the yard.

—Cindy Young

(Plants: Calibrachoa 'Minifamous Tangerine', Viola 'Columbine', Verbena 'Tapien Blue Violet', Bacopa 'Abunda Colossal White', Pelargonium 'Vancouver Centennial', pink impatiens, purple lobelia)

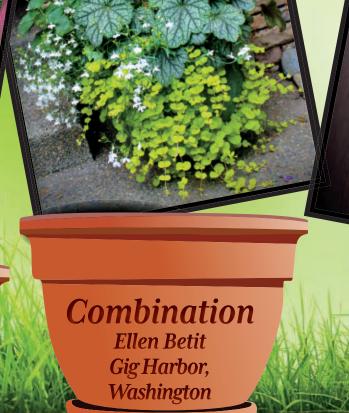
#### **Category: Edibles**

#### Ilona McHugh Oakland, California

I AM IMPRESSED by the skill that goes into the beautiful hand-glazing of ceramic pots. This pot has lovely vertical red elements that complement the striking red stems of the chard. The parsley adds a frivolous character and the marigold picks up the WINNERS' STORIES CONTINUED ON PAGE 48

The earth laughs in flowers.

-Ralph Waldo Emerson



Succulents
Garrett Parkinson
Woodland Hills,
California

MARCH 2013 The Costco Connection 47

#### **CONTAINER WINNERS**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 47

red hues and helps attract beneficial insects to the area to keep the edibles healthy. The warm red tones help give the promise of warm-weather harvests during the cool East Bay summer. When the light shines through the leaves it is quite a stunning display.

—Ilona McHugh

(Plants: Swiss chard, curly parsley, marigolds)

#### Category: Combination Ellen Betit Gig Harbor, Washington

THIS DESIGN WAS created with shade and cool Pacific Northwest weather in mind. I like to use a variety of textures and combine leaf colors with just one or two blossom colors. Understated. White pansies and tulips graced the pottery in the spring as the other plants were maturing around them. I'm in the garden every day it's not freezing or pouring rain. It's a healthy addiction!—*Ellen Betit* 

(Plants: Heuchera 'Venus', Heuchera villosa 'Thunderbird', 'Goldilocks' creeping jenny, Pelargonium 'Mystical White', 'Paper Moon' lobelia)

# Category: Succulents Garrett Parkinson Woodland Hills, California

WHEN I ORIGINALLY planted that pot I selected the various succulents by their size, shape, color and texture. Most of the succulents in the pot were trimmings from other pots that I had in my backyard.

I have been interested in gardening for some 21 years. It seemed like a lot of the places that we visited and liked had lots of very attractive succulents. I liked the feeling that they created, and they were so

unusual-looking. I have tried to duplicate some of those same feelings in our backyard. Our friends and family really enjoy spending time in our backyard. I have more than 100 pots!—Garrett Parkinson (Plants: I have maybe 20 different varieties of succulents and cacti growing in my backyard, and I do not know the names of any of them. I just like them!)

# Category: Creative Containers Elaine Horsley Emerald Hills. California

I PAINTED AN old claw-footed bathtub and filled it with a weeping cedar tree and some of my favorite succulents, which you can see blooming in the foreground, as well as others all around it. The succulents all look different or bloom at different times of the year. My favorite is the screaming kalanchoe in the forefront, which is why I submitted this spring photo. The tall, round "umbrella" decoration has a trumpet vine growing up it. I prune it so that it looks like a shower head is raining orange trumpet vine flowers into the bathtub in the summer.

—Elaine Horsley

lossoms for its own joy.

-Oscar Wilde

(Plants: Weeping cedar, variegated Aeonium, kalanchoe, variegated Plectranthus, sedum, assorted succulents)



All entries must be received by November 1, 2013. Winners will be determined by February 2014. Email one (1) high-resolution photo for each season and a short write-up, along with your Costco membership number and contact information, to *connection@costco.com*, with "Seasonal Garden Contest" in the subject line.

No purchase, payment or opt-in of any kind is necessary to enter or win this contest. Purchase will not improve an individual's chances of winning. Void where prohibited. Open to legal residents of the U.S. (except Puerto Rico) who are age 18 or older at the time of entry. One entry per household. Employees of Costco and their families are not eligible.

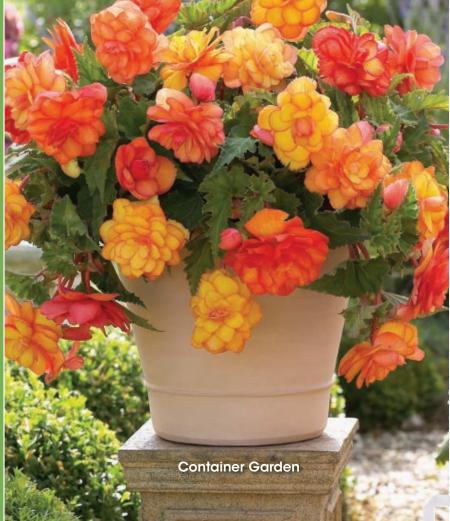
Creative Containers Elaine Horsley Emerald Hills, California





# Style in Bloom

Spring-planted gardens you will love to grow









#### **FIREWORKS IN THE GARDEN!**

Planted in the spring and available in a variety of heights, colors and shapes, there is a **summer bloom** right for every garden style. From the big blooms of the sun-loving dinnerplate dahlias to the shade-loving hostas, spring-planted bulbs and perennials are easy to grow. Grow them in containers on a patio, tuck them into shady nooks around trees, or use them to fill in sunny borders. **Plant in the spring for a fantastic summer showcase**.

May not be available in all locations.

WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM | AVAILABLE NOW Item #868915 (perennials), #125199 (landscape), #882504 (bulbs)





#### **By Kate Parham**

YOU FOUND THE perfect house, you've decorated it to a T and then—then you look at the yard. It's dying. It hasn't rained in weeks and you can't afford to keep the sprinklers on all day. What now? Fortunately, there are options, from specially developed lawn seed to drought-tolerant plants, that are perfect for those who live in dry, arid areas but still want a beautiful, green yard.

#### What does "drought-tolerant" mean?

Simply put, grasses and plants that are drought-tolerant, also referred to as droughtresistant or water-wise, "can endure conditerns everywhere are becoming unpredictable and erratic with global climate change," says Ogden. "Potable water is in short supply, even in areas with abundant rainfall; therefore, minimizing additional landscape irrigation makes sense [in multiple places]."

While Miracle-Gro provides several drought-tolerant products, including watersoluble lawn fertilizer and drought-tolerant grass seed, there are also a number of droughttolerant plants. "In our book, we feature 200 varieties with plant choices adapted to all climate regions, and also give mention to an additional 400 related plants," says Ogden,

local resources, such as the county extension office or landscape professionals. "In Austin, [Texas], the city sponsors the Grow Green program, which has a very informative website and publishes free materials on all facets of landscape design, installation, maintenance and problem solving," says Plotner, who notes other cities have similar programs.

If you want a drought-resistant lawn, Kiekenapp has a plan, though it varies based on whether you're planting a new lawn or overseeding an existing lawn. If your lawn is new, follow these easy steps:

- 1. Prepare the ground with a roto tiller, loosening soil and adding topsoil if the ground is very rocky.
- 2. Plant drought-tolerant seeds and keep them moist until germination with a sprinkler system or a thin layer of mulch or organic material. This usually takes about 10 to 14 days.
- **3.** After germination, the grass will sprout. Keep it watered with a regular schedule, and in six to eight weeks you can mow for the first time.

Follow a similar program with an existing lawn. Simply mow the lawn short, about half an inch high. Apply drought-tolerant grass seeds, taking care to keep them moist through germination. Mow as needed. Voila! A healthy, thriving lawn.

Kate Parham (www.kateparham.com) is a Washington, D.C.-based freelance writer.



## Creating a drought-resistant paradise

tions in which there is no rainfall over a protracted period of time," says Holly Plotner, a Travis County, Texas, Master Gardener.

In more specific terms, it refers to plants that "will remain healthy and attractive with just 1 inch of water every two weeks during the active growing season," says Scott Ogden, principal at Plant Driven Design (www.plant drivendesign.com) and co-author (with his wife, Lauren Springer Ogden) of the book Waterwise Plants for Sustainable Gardens (Timber Press, 2011).

What does this mean for you? It means that you can have a healthy, sustainable garden that will thrive with less work and water, even if you don't live in a plant-friendly climate.

#### Do you have the right climate?

"We have created three different types of drought-tolerant seed based on the different climates found in the U.S.," explains Herb Kiekenapp, national account manager at The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company. Kiekenapp says Scotts broke down the United States horizontally into three separate climates—top, middle and bottom third—with corresponding products for each (see "The Costco Connection" at right).

All of these products have a water-absorbent coating, a fertilizer and a fungicide to help them thrive in drought conditions.

However, the middle third of this country is not necessarily the only region that requires drought-tolerant gardening. "Most climates experience drought at some point, and weather patwho notes these plants include everything from trees and shrubs to perennials, grasses, succulents, bulbs and vines.

#### Getting started

Start by making a list of drought-resistant plants adapted to your climate that appeal to you, suggests Ogden. "Then figure out where these best fit on your site and how they can be placed attractively in the garden." It's important to consider the plants' unique attributes so that you can create attractive combinations to extend interest through the season. If you have questions, Plotner suggests contacting

This spring, Costco will be carrying Scotts Water Smart Plus grass seed—Sun & Shade Mix, Tall Fescue Mix and Bermuda grassfor each of the three appropriate climates. Costco also carries composters, as compost mulch helps with water retention as well as feeding soil.



## THIS IS WHAT WE CALL DINING OUT.







#### Tantalize Taste Buds and Ignite Inspiration

A KitchenAid® grill helps elevate outdoor entertaining. Even-Heat™ Technology ensures exceptional grilling over the entire cooking surface. And the durable 304 stainless steel construction allows the grill to stand up to harsh conditions and makes it easy to clean and maintain.

See digital editions for video.

#### **KitchenAid**<sup>®</sup>

Selection may vary by location.

WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM | AVAILABLE NOW

# Keep your cool

The 11-ft. Cantilever Patio Umbrella with Base keeps you stylishly in the shade so you don't lose your cool. The umbrella is constructed with Sunbrella® fabric that is resistant to stains and fading. The umbrella rotates 360 degrees on the base and the pole can be moved up or down to angle the umbrella as needed. The no-rust, heavy-duty aluminum frame and pole have a long-lasting, powder-coated finish. Umbrella cover included.

Umbrella should be lowered and secured in windy conditions or when not in use.

WAREHOUSE ONLY | AVAILABLE NOW Item #639854











#### **By Eva Shaw**

WHAT'S THE fastest-growing hobby in the U.S., one that's perfect for all ages and can be enjoyed in your own backyard? The answer is birding (granted, the photo gave it away). Birding, the cool term for what our parents called bird-watching, is entertaining, educational and great for the planet.

Depending on where you live, you might spot a yellowbellied sapsucker, brown booby or fork-tailed flycatcher right in your garden. If you're curious about identifying and feeding these fascinating and environmentally friendly feathered friends, here are tips to turn your own backyard into bird central.

Birds need foliage. Sounds obvious, but why? Trees and shrubs give shelter, are used for nesting and offer safety and camouflage from predators. They provide a tasty supply of seeds, fruit, berries and insects, too. When sunflowers and black-eyed Susans go to seed, for instance, blue jays, sparrows and goldfinches will feed on them and amuse you with their antics for weeks on end. Tubular-shaped, nectar-producing flowers like fuchsias are magnets for hummingbirds that seemingly defy gravity. Fruiting trees and bushes, such as crabapples, dogwoods, serviceberries and sumacs, are irresistible to berry-eating birds.

Birds must have water. Bird-friendly landscapes need more than flowers and trees. It'll seem as if you've put out the welcome mat by installing a bubbling fountain or birdbath in your garden. "Providing fresh water will keep birds coming your way," says Homestead,

#### The Costco Connection

Costco locations carry flowering plants that attract birds and bees during the peak spring weeks. Members will also find bird feeders, seed and fountains at select Costco locations and on Costco.com.

Florida, resident Larry Manfredi, of Larry Manfredi Birding Tours. He adds, "Make sure the water is always fresh and you might even see hawks and owls stop by for a drink or to take a bath."

Nancy Kenyon of Irvine, California, a birder and field-trip chairperson for the Sea & Sage Audubon Society, explains, "Water also helps birds keep their feathers in good condition by removing dust and loose feathers. Moving water will attract many birds, such as warblers and flycatchers, who would not otherwise visit your garden."

Imagine snapping pictures of birds splashing around in your garden's birdbath like toddlers in a tub. Oh, yes, birders do like to photograph and brag about the birds they've seen.

Birds need food. Want to boost the number of feathered friends? Set up and fill bird feeders daily to let birds know they can depend on you for food. Be wise about the placement of feeders. The best place to put your feeder is about 10 feet from a tree or shrub. Should a predator approach or if birds feel threatened, they can make a quick getaway. If you'd like to attract a specific variety, learn its preferences so you can add that seed to the feeder.

Ornithologist David N. Bonter, with Project FeederWatch, www.birds.cornell.edu/ pfw, at Cornell University, in Ithaca, New York, says, "Birds can become ill from leftover bits of seeds and hulls that become moldy, as well as from bird droppings that accumulate on feeder trays." He recommends cleaning feeders every two weeks or so. "Hummingbird feeders should be cleaned each time you refill the nectar, which should be every three to five days."

Check the Internet for birder groups in your area and for sites that help identify the birds in your garden. Need another reason to bring on the birds? Many birds feast on pesky,

#### Creating a beeand butterflyfriendly garden

DID YOU KNOW bees seem to prefer blue, yellow and purple flowers, and especially those with single-petal construction, such as cosmos and daisies? Or that butterflies fancy flowers with ample nectar, such as zinnias, asters, black-eyed Susans and sunflowers?

"Growing gardens that are bee- and butterfly-friendly has become the goal of many gardeners," says Costco member Renee Shepherd, owner of Renee's Garden Seeds, www.reneesgarden.com, in Felton, California. "This is especially true because, across the country, honeybees are mystifyingly disappearing, a phenomenon called colony collapse disorder. If there's a positive side, it is that people are realizing the value of all pollinators, which includes bees and butterflies, and there's a heightened awareness of the things gardeners can do that will help sustain their populations."

To create a garden where butterflies, bees and other beneficial insects do well, plant a variety of flowers, flowering trees and shrubs, and vegetables; add native plants specific to your area; and combat slugs and snails with organic methods.

biting insects. Feeding the birds could make this your best backyard summer ever.

Eva Shaw (www.evashaw.com) and her husband have turned their California garden into bird central.

## MY **HEART**. MY **ENERGY**. MY **LIFE**.

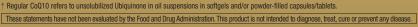
**UBIQUINOL.** The active CoQ10.



Ubiquinol is a vitamin-like substance that is essential to the body's energy production. It is found in mitochondria, the little "power stations" inside every cell that produce the energy necessary for life.

#### Why is Ubiquinol the better CoQ10 for me?

- · Ubiquinol is the active antioxidant form of CoQ10 that fights free radicals and helps protect the body's cells from damage.
- About 95% of the CoQ10 circulating in the body is in the form of Ubiquinol.
- The body's ability to convert Ubiquinone into Ubiquinol may diminish with age.



C=010

unol. The Gold Standard in CoO<sub>10.</sub>TM

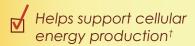
WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM | AVAILABLE NOW

Qunol MEGA vs. Regular CoQ10

Item #573854

# **WE PUT** THE "B

in benefits.



B vitamins help support a healthy nervous system<sup>†</sup>





† These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.





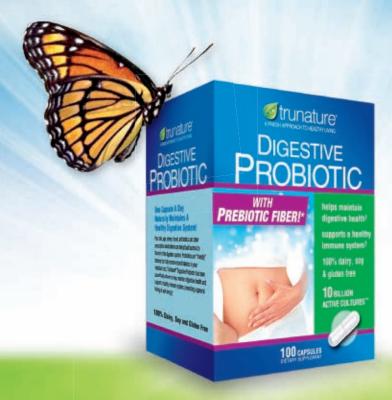
# SPRING is here!

BREATHE better....
FEEL better....
starting TODAY!

Selection varies. ALLER-TEC  $D^{\text{\tiny (R)}}$  & ALLERCLEAR  $D^{\text{\tiny (R)}}$  D products are available behind the pharmacy counter.



# Perfect balance. Healthy digestion. Natural immunity.



Poor diet, travel, medications, and even your common everyday hectic lifestyle can disrupt and deplete the healthy bacteria in your digestive tract, leaving you vulnerable to digestive upsets.

Just one daily trunature® Digestive Probiotic capsule with Prebiotic Fiber delivers 10 billion live active cultures to help restore and sustain the natural balance in your intestinal tract.<sup>†</sup>

trunature® Digestive Probiotic blend has been scientifically proven to offer both digestive and immune-system health benefits crucial to maintaining your overall well-being.<sup>†</sup>

trunature® Digestive Probiotic: exceptional quality at extraordinary value!

† These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.

trunature® Chewable Probiotic, a tasty grape-flavored tablet for both kids and adults. Item #514726 | Costco.com only

Visit Costco.com to learn about



The best brev

Choosing the right coffee or tea

#### By Malia Jacobson

WANT TO BREW a cup of better health? It's as simple as choosing the right beverage. Coffee and tea are overflowing with health benefits, according to a number of studies over the past several years.

Both tea and coffee are increasingly recognized for a growing slate of profound health benefits. "Coffee contains about 1,000 plant-based chemicals that contribute to the health benefits," says registered dietitian Gina Jarman Hill of Texas Christian University. According to new research from the National Cancer Institute, coffee drinkers are less likely to die from heart disease, respiratory disease, stroke, injuries and accidents, diabetes and infections.

Another study, by the Institute for Scientific Information on Coffee, showed that moderate coffee consumption lowered rates of Type 2 diabetes by 25 percent. And new research for the American Cancer Society shows that drinking four cups of caffeinated coffee per day cuts the risk of oral cancer by half.

While coffee is the subject of a bevy of brew-friendly research published in the past five years, tea has a centuries-old reputation as a health elixir. By choosing the right tea, you get high levels of beneficial antioxidants and polyphenols, says Costco member Fred Pescatore, M.D., best-selling author of *The Hamptons Diet* (Wiley, 2005). "With tea, you're getting full, all-around health coverage, from immune health to anti-aging benefits," he says.

© BENDITO / AGE FOTOST

Tea's antioxidant properties appear to have a protective effect against inflammation and cancer growth, according to a new study from the University of California, Los Angeles. In another study, Taiwanese researchers found that drinking green tea reduced the risk of lung cancer in smokers. Research published in the journal *BMJ Open* shows a lower risk of Type 2 diabetes among regular black tea drinkers.

Whether you reach for coffee or tea depends on your health goals and your individual tastes. Here's how to choose the healthiest cup.

#### For a stomach-friendly sip: rooibos tea

Individuals with peptic ulcers or gastrointestinal reflux disease, aka GERD, should avoid tannic teas or acidic coffees and caffeine, which may aggravate their condition. But acid-avoiders can still enjoy a good cuppa. Rooibos tea, or red tea, is completely caffeine free and more like an herbal infusion than a traditional leaf tea, and may be more tolerable for those with sensitive stomachs, says Pescatore.

#### For an anti-aging brew: green tea

Antioxidants are believed to fight aging and cancer by protecting the body's cells from environmental damage. For powerful antioxidants, you can't beat green tea, says Pescatore. "Green tea is less processed than black tea and undergoes less oxidization, so more of its antioxidants remain," he says. For the most

#### The Costco Connection

Costco members will find a variety of regular and decaffeinated ground and whole bean coffees, as well as green, black and herbal teas, at their local Costco.

potent anti-aging benefits, choose tea freshly brewed in loose leaf or tea bag form.

## For the best brew without a buzz: water-decaffeinated coffee

Though numerous studies point to caffeinated coffee's health benefits, decaffeinated coffee may be just as healthful, says Hill: "Interestingly, health benefits have been shown for both caffeinated and decaffeinated coffee. Therefore, researchers hypothesize that the health benefits are from compounds beyond caffeine." When it comes to preserving coffee's healthful properties, the method of decaffeination may matter; coffee beans decaffeinated by water processing (as opposed to direct processing, which uses caffeine-extracting agents) are thought to retain more beneficial compounds.

### For zero-caffeine confidence: herbal tea

It's worth noting that decaffeinated does not mean "caffeine free," says Pescatore. "Someone who drinks many cups of decaf coffee over the course of a day can easily consume as much caffeine as in a regular cup of coffee," he says. Nearly all decaffeinated coffee contains some caffeine—nearly 15 milligrams per serving, according to research from the University of Florida. For a truly caffeine-free cup, choose an herbal tea such as chamomile, ginger, lemongrass or mint.

Coffee and tea are not for everyone; some health conditions, including heart problems, headaches and insomnia, may necessitate the avoidance of caffeine (and because caffeine is not listed on nutrition labels, it can be all too easy to get more buzz than you bargain for). When in doubt, check with your doctor before indulging.

Costco member Malia Jacobson is a nationally published health journalist.



## it's a beautiful day... Glade fragrance is available at Costco

Lavender & Peach Blossom

The lovely scent of fresh lavender with a delicate touch of peach.

Red Honeysuckle Nectar™

A fragrant bouquet of honeysuckle, Pink Lady apple and dewberry scents.

See your March coupon book and save \$3.50.





PLUGINS® SCENTED OIL



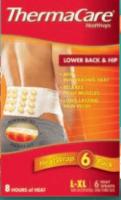
©2013 S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc. All rights reserved. 812639 WAREHOUSE ONLY | AVAILABLE EARLY MARCH Item #726310

# Tough Pain Solutions











Don't let tough pain slow your day down. Take on tough pain with Advil.® Pain is also one of the most common causes of sleeplessness. If pain is keeping you awake at night, sleep better with Advil®PM.

Only ThermaCare® has patented heat cells that penetrate deep for up to 16 hours of relief. Nothing has been proven to relieve tough back pain longer than ThermaCare®\*

Use as directed.
Use Advil®PM as directed for occasional sleeplessness associated with minor aches and pains. LIQUI-GELS is a trademark or registered trademark of Catalent Pharma Solutions

Use as directed. \*Among OTC portable heat wraps and patches WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM | AVAILABLE NOW



strengthen and rebuild joints.\* So you can spend your time doing what you love. Like swimming one more lap.

\* THESE STATEMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN EVALUATED BY THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION. THIS PRODUCT IS NOT INTENDED TO DIAGNOSE, TREAT, CURE OR PREVENT ANY DISEASE.

ADVANCED

Triple Strength DETARY SUPPLEMENT

160 COATED TABLES

# The Best Stuff in the Joint.



Osteo Bi-Flex® helps revitalize your joints to keep 'em jumpin'.\*



#### STAYING HEALTHY OUTDOORS

# Raking bad



By John Gallucci Jr.

SPRING IS UPON us. This is when our green thumbs come out and we begin our gardening routines. But take care: Gardening can also take a physical toll, thanks to the bending,

lifting, kneeling, raking and digging.

Gardening chores put many different muscles and joints into movement. The larger muscle groups of the legs, arms and back are utilized during these chores. Over the next few months it is important to begin a simple stretching routine for these muscle groups. As with any exercise routine, you should warm up before stretching [exercises could include jump rope, squat jumps or jumping jacks]. I recommend that your warm-up be enough to break a sweat before stretching and progressing into your activity of choice. By maintaining good flexibility, you will see much less incidence of muscle strains and prolonged stiffness or pain. Stretches should be held for 10 to 15 seconds before activity and for 20 to 30 seconds after activity.

It is also important not to do too much too soon. Many folks sit at their desks all week, then try to clean up the yard, till and plant, all in one day. If that describes you, you should try instead to break up gardening into segments with rest periods in between so you do not become fatigued and ultimately injure yourself.

You must also remember to hydrate appropriately. Dehydration can cause muscle fatigue and cramps, which can lead to more dangerous health issues. I recommend drinking at least six 8-ounce glasses of water per day, and drinking at least six ounces of water every 20 to 30 minutes during activity. You will have more energy and be able to garden longer without fatigue or injury.

Finally, when you tackle a project, make sure you are using the right-size tool in the appropriate manner, such as standing on a ladder while pruning, using a shovel for pushing instead of digging or utilizing a rake for leaves instead of for tilling. All too often, I see patients who have injured themselves by using the wrong equipment.

John Gallucci Jr. is the medical coordinator for Major League Soccer in addition to owning and operating JAG Physical Therapy's six outpatient physical therapy facilities.

# Brain Inju Awareness

"BRAIN INJURIES do not discriminate" is the message emphasized by the Brain Injury Association of America in its 2013 awareness campaign.

Facts tell the story.

- 1.7 million people, including 475,000 children, sustain a traumatic brain injury (TBI) in the U.S. each year. Of those individuals, 52,000 will die, 275,000 will be hospitalized and 1.3 million will be treated and released from an emergency room.
- 3.1 million people live with lifelong disability as a result of TBI.
- TBI contributes to a third of all injury-related deaths in the U.S. each year.
- Causes of TBI include falls (35 percent), car crashes (17 percent), workplace accidents (16 percent) and assaults (10 percent).
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that TBI costs the U.S. \$76.3 billion each vear in direct medical costs and indirect costs such as lost productivity.

No two brain injuries are alike, and TBI is not an isolated event. For many. it is the start of a lifelong neurological disability, often misdiagnosed and misunderstood. Immediate access to expert trauma care, specialized rehabilitation and lifelong disease management are a few of the elements needed to restore and maintain quality of life.

To learn more about TBI and how you can help, visit www.biausa.org.

-David Wight

# Talk to\_your

IN TODAY'S WORLD, savs Costco member and Harvard physician Dr. Leana Wen, author of When Doctors Don't Listen (Thomas Dunne Books, 2013), when patients go to the doctor, what they get are tests to rule out problems, and patients often end up learning only what they don't have, as opposed to an actual diagnosis of what they do have.

As a result of how our healthcare system has evolved, says Wen, medicine has morphed from thoughtful engagement between doctors and patients to cookbook or cookie-cutter medicine that regards all individuals as alike, which can lead to patients being mis- or undiagnosed, left with huge bills, and suffering the side effects of unnecessary tests and months, sometimes years, of uncertainty and angst.

Inspired by her mother's long

battle with cancer, Wen is passionate about guiding patients to advocate for better care by doing one very simple thing: asking for a diagnosis when they go to see their doctor. Her book's tips include the 8 Pillars to Better Diagnosis so patients can help their doctors reach the right diagnosis:

1. Tell your whole story. Even if your doctor is steering you away from a narrative and toward the cookbook world of "chief complaints," tell your whole story.

2. Assert yourself in the doctor's thought process. Find out what your doctor is thinking as he or she is listening to your history.

3. Participate in your physical exam. As your doctor is examining you, ask what he or she is looking for.

4. Make the differential diagnosis together.

Keep asking what else could be going on. Evaluate with your doctor the likelihood of each possible diagnosis.

5. Partner for the decisionmaking process. Partner with your doctor to devise a plan for narrowing down possible diagnoses.

6. Apply tests rationally. Do not just consent to tests;

ensure that your doctor explains why each test should be done.

7. Use common sense to confirm the working diagnosis. You should reach at least a working diagnosis at the end of every visit to the doctor. Make sure that the diagnosis makes sense.

8. Integrate your diagnosis into the healing process. Once a diagnosis is made, ask questions so you understand possible treatments as well as their risks and benefits.

To learn more about Dr. Wen or to order her book, visit www. whendoctorsdontlisten.com. (B)







#### MegaRed® Joint Care with Omega-3 Krill Oil

One little MegaRed® Joint Care softgel is a powerhouse for your joint health.\* It combines the power of omega-3 krill oil with hyaluronic acid, a natural lubricant, and astaxanthin, an antioxidant to help relieve oxidative damage and improve the overall health of your joints.\* Your joints will love it. And so will you.

For more information, call 1-800-526-6251.





60 SOFTGELS

DIETARY SUPPLEMENT



\* THESE STATEMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN EVALUATED BY THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION. THIS PRODUCT IS NOT INTENDED TO DIAGNOSE, TREAT, CURE OR PREVENT ANY DISEASE.

† Based on a 56-day randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled study. Initial joint comfort may be felt in as little as 7 days, with continued improvement to full effect in 8 weeks.
© 2013 Schiff Nutrition Group, Inc.

WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM | AVAILABLE NOW | tem #629441



# GIVE YOUR DIGESTION THE ADVANTAGE.



## Powerful little gummies that survive 10x better.\*

Try the tasty new gummies from Digestive Advantage. Its probiotic survives 10x better than other probiotics to get where you need it for healthy digestion. Your whole family will love them.



\* THESE STATEMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN EVALUATED BY THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION. THIS PRODUCT IS NOT INTENDED TO DIAGNOSE, TREAT, CURE OR PREVENT ANY DISEASE.

‡ Based on median % survivability of Digestive Advantage® vs. probiotic supplements and 20 probiotic yogurts in simulated gastric pH for 2 hours. Survivability and delivery of probiotic cells to the small and large intestines is one of several factors influencing overall product effect.

671-C50 © 2013 Schiff Nutrition Group, Inc.



#### By Jonathan Kellerman

I'M OFTEN ASKED how similar I am to my fictional hero, Alex Delaware. My stock answer: We're both psychologists and driven fellows, but Alex is younger, cuter and braver. An adventurous guy, he lives up in the hills, while I, a long-married father and grandfather, remain on flat land.

But several years ago, my wife, the beautiful, gifted best-seller Faye Kellerman, and I headed for higher ground, a patch of northern New Mexico where four mountain ranges converge. The air is sweet, the biggest of skies is blue 300 days a year and the quiet allows us to get a lot of writing done. We haven't abandoned city living, but we have come to love and respect our high-altitude life.

A couple of years ago, forest fires raging 50 miles to the west caused mule deer, rabbits, groundhogs, chipmunks, snakes and lizards to migrate closer to us than usual. And, of course, the creatures that prey upon all of the above followed suit. On top of that, the closure of several hiking trails freed the local fauna from the creatures they fear mostpeople—emboldening them to explore.

That summer, anyone reckless enough to leave seeds for the birds was likely to meet up with a bear. Or two. Or three. Sightings of mountain lions were up, and ditto for raptors, mostly red-tailed hawks. On an early-morning walk with our dog, Faye and I spied a bald eagle hovering directly above our road. Those guys love fish and generally stick close to water, and the Rio Grande is miles away. But why not take a little side trip to the buffet table?

One Saturday, as the sun set, we were relaxing in our den, enjoying the shifting hues of the Jemez Mountains. Suddenly, I noticed movement on the flagstone pathway that borders the house.

Turning, I saw it.

A bobcat was making its way up the path, resembling nothing so much as a miniature leopard. Without a trace of fear, it ambled past, limbs working with liquid precision, before heading into the canyon and the arroyo that comprise most of our acreage.

Normally reclusive creatures, bobcats are usually spotted, if at all, at dusk, as they prowl for dinner. So seeing this one was a treat, but in view of the shifting ecology wrought by the fire, not as surprising as it might normally be.

What did shock us was what occurred the following day at noon, as we embarked on a trip into town to load up on provisions.

There, crossing the road directly in front of us, was the same cat. And this time, it wasn't alone; two kittens followed closely, a pair of fluff balls not long past infancy. Despite their tiny size, they moved with that special cat assurance and grace, and we watched, transfixed, as they tagged dutifully behind Mom.

Fave Kellerman.

Jonathan Kellerman with

his wife and fellow novelist,

Without looking back, she ascended to the top of a berm and vanished from view, and the first kitten followed.

But the other one stopped.

And stared.

Talk about a giant dose of attitude. At that moment, the lethal predator this tot was destined to grow into was as obvious as the cunning in its sharp little eyes.

The face-off lasted a few seconds. Then Feisty Feline gave an arrogant toss of its applesize head and was gone.

That forest fire won't be the last visited upon northern New Mexico; conflagrations are a part of nature. Should we be there the next time, we'll be looking for that cat.

#### The Costco Connection

Guilt (Item #729351) will be available in most Costco warehouses.

# LOSE THE WEEK-OLD STAINS & ODORS

**KEEP THE WONDER.** 











+ Downy + bore

©2013 P&G

# March Book buyers' picks

Defending Jacob, by William Landay. I love that books can transport me to any number of places and times I might otherwise never be able to experience. I also appreciate books that can safely lead me to and away from situations I don't want to experience. Landay's page-turner is in that category. When a murder shocks a small town, Andy Barber, the assistant district attorney, is called on to defend his son, Jacob, and, in the process, must deal with shocking revelations.

> -Beth Allev inventory control specialist, books

Six Years, by Harlan Coben. As a general rule, I'm not a fan of thrillers. I do, however, make an exception for Harlan Coben's books. It's been six years since Natalie, the love of Jake Sanders' life, married another man. Upon learning that Natalie's husband has died, Jake can't help but attend the funeral. The grieving widow he sees isn't the Natalie he once knew. As he searches for the truth, all of the memories he once held dear begin to unravel. This is Coben at his best.

> -Scott Losse inventory control specialist, books

The Striker, by Clive Cussler. On Cussler's website, the author says he considers himself more of an entertainer than a writer, and I have to agree. From the Dirk Pitt series to this Isaac Bell series, Cussler's stories are satisfying reads. In this latest novel, Isaac Bell is only two years out of his apprenticeship at the Van Dorn Detective Agency. Hired to hunt for radical unionist saboteurs in coal mines, he witnesses an accident that makes him think something else is going on. Bell quickly finds himself pitted against two ruthless opponents who aren't about to let some wet-behind-theears detective stand in their way.

-Chris Burns inventory control specialist, books



#### **NONFICTION**

Salt, Sugar, Fat, by Michael Moss. I can't remember the last time I met a baked good I didn't like. And I'm pretty sure I'm not alone. So when Pulitzer Prize-winner Moss says that the average American eats 70 pounds of sugar a year, I'm not that surprised. And sugar isn't our only dietary enemy; there's also salt and fat. With this book, Moss takes readers inside the labs at several large food companies as scientists enhance the mouthfeel of fat or calculate the "bliss point" of sugary beverages. You will never look at processed foods or their nutrition labels the same way.

-Shana Lind-Stowers, assistant buyer, books

Pintail | paperback | fiction | available now | Item #743481



Berkley | paperback | fiction | on sale March 5 | Item #743484

A chance meeting with a young boy

Marion Flint in the heartfelt novel

The Memory of Love. And The Book of

*Jonas* is a story about the horrifying cost of war and what happens when

Love takes many forms

#### Compelling new thrillers!

The Beggar's Opera exposes the bureaucracy, corruption, and beauty of Hemingway's Havana. The Gods of Gotham revisits 1845 New York City as anti-Irish rage infects the city and reluctant police officer Timothy Wilde investigates a brutal killer.



Plume | paperback | fiction | available now | Item #739130

## The most beloved books for children

With almost 40 million books in print, Jan Brett is one of the nation's most foremost authors of children's books. Don't miss Hoppi the lovable bunny hero helping the Easter Bunny in The Easter Egg, an amazing turtle on a quest in Mossy and many more.

G.P. Putnam's Sons | hardcover | fiction | available early March | Item #738842

### Demystify complicated subjects

The Big Ideas books have easy-to-follow graphics, illustrations, and accessible text to simply explain difficult concepts. The Psychology Book is an essential reference for anyone interested in the mind. Figure out how finances really work with The Economics Book. Go beyond "What are they thinking?" and explore the history of political thought with The Politics Book, and more.









DK Publishers | hardcover | nonfiction | available early March | Item #645020

#### Hours of interactive sticker fun

Kids can really get creative with giant sticker books that inspire imaginative play. Each book includes over 1,000 reusable stickers, 10 themed sticker sheets, 15 interactive scenes, and 25 design pages—so the possibilities are truly limitless. Choose from Iron

> Man, Captain America and the other Marvel Superheroes, Mickey Mouse and friends, the Disney princesses, and more.

| sticker pad | fiction | available now | Item #564016

Books may not be available in all locations. All book jackets are subject to change. Political apinions expressed in books carried by Costco in no way reflect the opinions of Costco's management, buying staff, or The Costco Connection.

**WAREHOUSE ONLY** 



#### Treasured favorites

Little Golden Books have been entertaining young readers for decades. Now, with these deluxe collections you can enjoy all of your favorites in one beautifully bound compilation. Choose all of your little one's favorites: Ariel and Cinderella and all the rest of the royalty in The

Disney Princess Little Golden Book, bunnies and farm animals and fun in Favorite Little Golden Books for Springtime, and more. Each box set includes five Little

Golden Books.

Disney | hardcover |

fiction | available early March | Item #703148



Random House | hardcover box set | fiction | available early March | Item #719197

#### A collection of favorites

The Disney Storybook Collections are a great way to end the day and send little ones off to Lullaby Land. Each collection features nearly

20 favorite stories, hundreds of illustrations, and countless much-loved characters. Choose from Disney Fairies Storybook Collection, Disney Bedtime Favorites, and more.

Take-along fun

The Deluxe Book Gift Sets will enchant children with hours of entertaining reading and interactive fun.

Each set comes with three storybooks, either a music player with 20 tunes or a movie projector with 9 discs, lots of stickers and a handy drawstring pouch so that kids can take the good times with them wherever they go. Kids can go glam with the Disney princesses, sing along with Minnie Mouse, or explore the Island of Sodor with Thomas & Friends. Each set is a party in a box!



Readers Digest | hardcover book set | fiction | available mid-March | Item #705895

Move your student to the head of the class

Some primary grades are harder than others. With 320 pages full of learning activities, Giant workbooks are an important part of a student's success. Giant Math helps with money and fractions, word problems, and much more.

> Giant Spelling enforces important spelling patterns, letter combinations, and more. And Giant Science puts the world at students' fingertips, offering information about weather, plants, and insects—you name it. Set the fundamentals in stone now with Giant workbooks from School Zone Publishing.

School Zone | paperback | educational | available mid-March | Item #738832

#### Sounds bring favorite books to life

Reading Sound Storybook Treasuries are a completely interactive experience. Corresponding sound buttons within the text bring the action

to life for budding readers. Take a romp with Simba, Nemo, and more with the Disney Sound Storybook Treasury, head over to the magical island of Sodor with Thomas & Friends Sound Storybook Treasury, and more.





International | hardcover | fiction | available mid-March | Item #728996

# 🗱 American Girl

Splash

Bash

#### Pet Travel Carrier Sets

Girls can take their pets on the go! Each Travel Carrier Set includes an activity book, a pet, a travel pillow, and bowls Choose

from the many sets availableor collect them all!



available mid-March | Item #694983



# Blooming brilliant Real life plants seeds for debut novel

#### By Hope Katz Gibbs

ACACIA SYMBOLIZES secret love, aloe means grief and basil indicates hate. Give a lover a planter of lavender and you are expressing mistrust. A bouquet of jasmine says it is attachment you desire.

That's but a pinch of what you'll learn about the meaning of flowers in Vanessa Diffenbaugh's breakout novel, The Language of Flowers, the comingof-age tale of orphan Victoria Jones, a child whose emotional scars are exacerbated by the foster-care system that can't find a way to help her.

From page one it's easy to see why Victoria's saga has inspired romantics, enchanted book clubs and galvanized a legion of people to help teens who are newly emancipated from foster care at 18.

"Like Victoria, who ended up living in the woods after she left the system, these teens often have few resources, little support and limited prospects for a happy future," explains Diffenbaugh, who was 23 when she got a taste of the troubles plaguing foster kids.

She and her boyfriend (now husband), PK, had been mentoring kids whose mom was a drug addict. Eventually the state put them into foster care, where they were split up and two were sent to live with a family that didn't speak English.

"It taught us a lot about what was wrong with the system, and what we wanted to someday fix," she tells The Connection from her home office in Boston.

#### Signed book giveawa

COSTCO HAS 50 SIGNED COPIES of Vanessa Diffenbaugh's The Language of Flowers to give away. To enter, go to Costco.com, search for "MarBookPick" and follow the instructions. Or print your name, address and daytime phone number on a postcard or letter and send it to: Vanessa Diffenbaugh, The Costco Connection, P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088.

NO PURCHASE, PAYMENT OR OPT-IN OF ANY KIND IS NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN THIS SWEEPSTAKES.

Purchase will not improve odds of winning. Sweepstakes is sponsored by Random House, 1745 Broadway, New York, NY 10019. Open to legal residents of the U.S. (except Puerto Rico) who are age 18 or older at the time of entry. One entry per household. Entries must be received by April 1, 2013. Winners will be randomly selected and notified by mail on or before May 1, 2013. The value of the prize is \$15. Void where prohibited. Winners are responsible for all applicable federal, state and local taxes. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. Employees of Costco or Random House and their families are not eligible



#### **Tablet or smartphone?**

Watch Vanessa Diffenbaugh talk about The Language of Flowers in our digital newsstand and online editions.



Vanessa Diffenbaugh

After the couple was married and their first daughter was 6 months old, they turned desire into action and became the legal guardians of Tre'von, 15, a student at the school where PK was teaching. He moved in on Valentine's Day 2007, and that week Diffenbaugh learned she was pregnant with her second child. Soon after, they took in another teen.

It was during that time that *The* Language of Flowers began to take root. It took 18 months for the author to write the story of the misunderstood

orphan who uses the meaning of flowers as a tool to communicate.

"I have always loved the language of flowers," says Diffenbaugh, who at 16 discovered Kate Greenaway's textbook Language of Flowers, based on the Victorian-era science of floriography. "When I dreamed up Victoria, it seemed only logical that a young woman who had trouble connecting with others would communicate through a forgotten language that no one understands."

Diffenbaugh's book also shines a spotlight on the difficulty of raising strong, healthy children, depicted in the relationship between Victoria and her 32nd foster mother, Elizabeth—the woman who teaches her what flowers mean.

"Our standards for motherhood are so high that many of us harbor intense, secret guilt for every harsh word we speak to our children, every negative thought that enters our minds," Diffenbaugh admits. "The pressure is so powerful that many of us never speak aloud of our challenges."

Diffenbaugh hopes to bring those secrets to the surface. She says, "It is my belief that we could prevent much child abuse and neglect if we, as a society, recognized the intense challenge of motherhood and offered more support for mothers who desperately want to love and care for their children."

Diffenbaugh also hopes to make an impact on the millions of foster children who are aging out of the system through the Camellia Network (camellianetwork.org), a nonprofit she co-founded with her longtime friend Isis Dallis Keigwin.

She explains that the Camellia Network is named after the flower to emphasize a belief in the interconnectedness of humanity. "It's a reminder that the success or failure of these young people is directly tied to our own."

Hope (symbolized by hawthorn) Katz Gibbs is a freelance writer in Arlington, Virginia.



Diffenbaugh also got me-and I'm sure all readers—thinking about 18-year-olds who are emancipated from the foster-care system. I can only imagine the feeling of being let go with next to no resources or safety net.

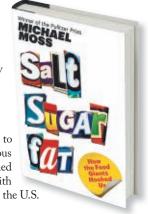
Before I scare off any readers, please know that this is a beautiful and wellcrafted story. Victoria, the protagonist, uses her skills with flowers to not only help others, but ultimately help herself.

For more book picks, see page 65.



## The American addiction to fast food and its enablers

Salt Sugar Fat is a journey into the world of the processed-food giants and the story of how they have deployed these three essential ingredients to dominate the American diet. Pulitzer Prize—winning investigative reporter Michael Moss shows—with meticulous reporting, access to confidential files and memos, and numerous sources—how these companies have pushed ahead despite their own misgivings and with obesity and diabetes steadily on the rise in the U.S.



Random House | hardcover | nonfiction | available now | Item #740220

## An inspiring call to action

Women compose the majority of the college graduates in the United States, and yet men still hold most of the leadership positions. In *Lean In*, the CEO of Facebook takes a look at why progress has stalled for women and offers compelling solutions so they can achieve their full potential.

Knopf | hardcover | nonfiction | on sale March 11 | Item #740353

#### A world of magic and mystery

George R.R. Martin has created a world of revelry and revenge, of wizardry and warfare—unlike anything experienced before. Already hailed as a classic, the series is destined to stand as one of the greatest achievements in fiction. The third volume, *A Storm of Swords*, follows the action as the land of Westeros prepares for a titanic showdown. Make sure to read all the books in the series before watching *Game* 

of Thrones, the original series based on Martin's works, now airing on HBO.









#### Enemies are everywhere

When Sophie Brinkman meets Hector Guzman, she's instantly charmed. And when Sophie learns that Guzman is the head of an international crime ring it'll take every ounce of courage she's got to navigate the web of deadly gamesmanship in the new thriller, *The Andalucian Friend*.



Crown | hardcover | fiction | on sale March 12 | Item #740198

#### Tasty meals that do a body right

SHERYL SANDGERG

The Meatless cookbook offers a comprehensive collection of easy, delicious everyday meat-free meals. Get the newest best-seller from the people who brought you Everyday Food and Everyday Food Light. And Power Foods shows home cooks how to craft amazing meals from the healthiest foods on earth.



Clarkson Potter | paperback | cookbook | available now | Item #738187

# METANDER MICALL SAITH

#### Precious Ramotswe's triumphant return

Recurring dreams, troubled orphans and a tall stranger come together to make life difficult for the unshakable Precious Ramotswe. This time the best detective in Botswana faces a tricky situation when personal and professional lives collide in *The Limpopo Academy of Private Detection*.

Anchor | paperback | fiction | available mid-March | Item #739132

## A moving novel of fathers and sons In 1973 Paul Tracey was in the stands as

In 1973 Paul Tracey was in the stands as his father threw a fastball against baseball sensation Calico Joe that would change all of their lives forever. The baseball is thrilling, but it's what happens off the field that makes John Grisham's *Calico Joe* a classic.

Bantam | paperback | fiction | on sale March 26 | Item #740263

#### A story of life...and death

From the best-selling author of *Plainsong* and *Eventide* comes a story of how the bonds of family carry people through the most difficult of times. *Benediction* captures the fullness of life by taking a look at every stage. Deeply illuminating.

Knopf | hardcover | fiction | available now | Item #739108



### Now in paperback

Calico Ioe

Don't miss a finalist for the National Book Award—*Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*, a powerful debut by Ben Fountain.

"The *Catch-22* of the Iraq War ... Fountain applies the heat of his wicked sense of humor while you face the truth of who we



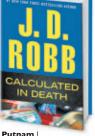
have become. Live one day inside Billy Lynn's head and you'll never again see our soldiers or America in the same way."

> — Karl Marlantes, bestselling author of *Matterhorn*

"Warning: J. D. Robb's *In Death* novels are highly addictive.

No one can read just one."

—New York Journal of Books



Putnam | hardcover | fiction | available now | item #739120

On Manhattan's Upper East Side, a woman lies dead at the bottom of the stairs, stripped of all her valuables. Most cops might call it a mugging gone wrong, but Lieutenant Eve Dallas knows better—and to catch a killer, she might have to use herself as bait.



Putnam | hardcover | fiction | on sale March 5 | item #739121

"Bell is a superb action hero."

—Library Journal

A bright, young Isaac Bell is witness to a terrible accident in the coal mines that makes him think something is amiss. Bell quickly finds himself pitted against two of the most ruthless opponents he has ever known, who are not about to let a rookie detective stand in their way.







#### By Bryan Reesman

THE INTERNATIONAL MANHUNT for Osama bin Laden swirled about in the public consciousness for nearly a decade. Then, with one quick but intense Navy SEAL raid on a fortified compound in Pakistan in May 2011, the life of the world's most wanted man abruptly ended.

What the general populace did not see was the grueling investigation and behind-the-scenes wrangling that defined the long, harrowing search. In the acclaimed, controversial film *Zero Dark Thirty*, director Kathryn Bigelow and screenwriter–investigative journalist Mark Boal plunge viewers into the world of CIA operative Maya (portrayed by Oscar nominee Jessica Chastain), a young recruit who for almost 10 years scours the Middle East and South Asia for bin Laden, involved in everything from snooping to torture, at the cost of her personal life.

"There's a lot that is quite different about me and the character, but we both do love our work, and I can understand the idea of focusing on something," says Chastain. "I never lose myself in my work the way that Maya does. I'm always aware of my life that I have waiting for me, and I can recognize who I am as the same person who I was a few years ago. Maya can't."



**Tablet or smartphone?**Watch a trailer for *Zero Dark Thirty* in our digital newsstand and online editions.

#### **The Costco Connection**

Zero Dark Thirty is available in Blu-ray and standard DVD at all Costco warehouses.

Chastain's character is based on a real-life undercover operative who played an essential role in finding bin Laden, despite which, according to a *Washington Post* article last December, she was later passed over for a CIA promotion due to her allegedly prickly and combative nature. But the way that Boals, Bigelow and Chastain represent her suggests that it was her steadfast determination, self-sacrifice and, indeed, her no-holds-barred approach that helped her succeed in finding bin Laden's compound.

"I think Maya has always been the smartest person in the room, even when she was a child," notes Chastain. "When you're that person, I think you probably don't have the best social skills when it comes to playing well with others. And if someone's wrong, you don't try to massage their ego, you tell them that they're wrong. Maya isn't interested in going up the ranks of the CIA; she's more interested in doing the work and getting people to listen to her."

Maya is an intense character who barely cracks a smile during the film's tense but beguiling two-and-a-half-hour journey. Even when there is a moment of personal levity, bad mojo tends to disrupt it. "She's completely given herself over to this mission, so there's a servitude that comes with that," observes Chastain. "She feeds it and wears it as a badge.

She's giving her life to this because she felt she had a calling, and because of that there isn't a lot of room for laughter."

While Chastain says she did extensive research on the war on terror and learned a lot from Boal, she also pasted up photographs, in her hotel room, of all the terrorists that Maya sought. "Even though I was shooting difficult scenes during the day," she explains, "I wanted to constantly be confronted with that kind of energy."

While different political factions have made accusations about the message of the film, it ultimately comes off as apolitical and more of a re-creation of events. The moments of torture are unsettling to watch but (to this writer) do not feel slanted toward any one viewpoint.

Chastain believes the message is about America owning its history and deciding where the country goes from here. Even the compound raid is not glorified.

"The great thing with Kathryn, is in her films, violence is never celebrated," stresses Chastain. "Even with *Point Break*, whenever there's violence and death, she doesn't have people's fists pumping. In our film, there is one whoop, but the majority of it is a more somber event. Nowadays, in American films, there's so much violence that goes unnoticed because we've gotten used to it and have never really dealt with the consequences of what violence is. Kathryn deals with it."

Bryan Reesman is a New York-based journalist.

# Play like you mean it!



Give your joints the support of **Kirkland Signature Glucosamine** with MSM and spend the day doing things you love.\*

- Supports cartilage\*
- Cushions joints\*
- Helps promote comfortable joint movement\*
- Promotes flexibility and range of motion\*
- Provides a natural source of sulfur, a vital mineral for the formation of collagen, connective tissue and healthy joint cartilage\*
- Supports joint comfort\*



These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.



Visit our full-service pharmacy for all of your prescription, health and wellness needs.



USP has tested and verified select Kirkland Signature supplements for their ingredients, potency and manufacturing process. USP sets official standards for dietary supplements. ee www.usp-dsvp.org

**Exclusively from Costco Wholesale** WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM | AVAILABLE NOW



IT IS THE WORLD'S longest-running musical, seen by more than 60 million people in 42 countries, and winner of 96 international awards. It is *Les Misérables*, based on Victor Hugo's epic novel about former convict Jean Valjean and his efforts to find redemption amidst revolutionary turmoil in early-19th-century France. Yet despite the acclaim, it took more than 20 years for the musical to make it to the screen. Frustrating for fans yet fortuitous for Hugh Jackman, who plays Valjean and calls it "the role of a lifetime."

The much-in-demand Australian star of television, stage and film was determined to do whatever it took to win the part.

"It was an audition I'd been preparing for, honestly, probably for about a year," Jackman, 45, says in a phone interview with *The Connection*.

"When I went to my audition, I went straight to John [Lader, his New York voice coach] to warm up for an hour," he recalls. "When I came out, someone had stolen the wheels off my bike. One of the things I always do before an audition is ride my bike. Literally, I carried the frame for 16 blocks, then ran up two flights of stairs, completely out of breath."

Jackman worked with the film's musical director, Stephen Brooker, for an hour, followed by a three-hour audition with director Tom Hooper.

Once Jackman signed on for the role, he started to get himself ready for the shoot.

"As an actor, I see my body as an instrument. Changing my body is like changing a

**Tablet or smartphone?**See Hugh Jackman in a clip from Les Misérables in our digital newsstand and online editions. On stage, Valjean goes from prisoner to respected businessman and mayor in a matter of minutes, not allowing much of a physical transformation.

"What Tom wanted to do, which you can't do on stage, was to really show the difference of the man from the time he exits prison to the time he was mayor of the town," Jackman says. "And it's an important plot point, why Javert [the lawman who is determined to put Valjean back in prison] wouldn't recognize him.

"So I lost 35 pounds, then put it all back on. And [putting it back on] was, I've got to tell you, a little more fun," he laughs.

The shoot was grueling. Hooper insisted that the actors sing live on set, forgoing the traditional film music practice of prerecording and lip-synching.

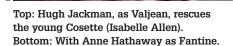
"We were singing eight-and-a-half-hour days, then spent two to three hours in the gym, and a very strict diet," Jackman says. "Everybody was sucking on lozenges; everyone had some kind of weird brew. We had humidifiers everywhere."

What could have been a nightmare of a production period was helped by careful planning.

"It was a real bit of genius scheduling," Jackman recalls. "Very rarely did you have two big scenes in a row. It's just impossible to sing full out for 12 hours and not have some effect the next day."

As prepared as Jackman was—he spent a year before the shoot doing a one-man stage show to build stamina—there was an early bout of self-doubt.

"The moment I got the phone call saying I had the part, I was instantly so thrilled and



terrified," he says. "I knew it was going to take everything I had to pull it off. ... I had one really bad rehearsal. I remember going home, and I said to my wife [actress Deborra-Lee Furness], 'I'm not sure if I can do it.' ... And she convinced me that I was the right guy, enough to be able to turn up the next day and everything was fine.

"Valjean is not a walk in the park," Jackman explains. "It has a two-and-a-half-octave range; every scene is physically, emotionally taxing. It was a mountain to climb."

Audiences, reviews and award nominations prove Hugh Jackman made it to the top of that mountain.

### **The Costco Connection**

Les Misérables will be available on March 22 at all warehouses in Blu-ray combo pack and standard DVD.

PLACES TO GO. PRICES YOU'LL LOVE.



QUALITY | VALUE | EXPERIENCE | WOW!



2013 MSD Consumer Care, Inc. All rights reserved

### **Costco Member Savings** Plus a Free Upgrade

- One additional driver fee waived
- Award-winning customer service
- More than 5,500 locations in North America



TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Customer Number CSTCUPG. Offer and/or discount may not be used in conjunction with any other coupon, offer, weekend special rate or any other discounted rate. Normal rental qualifications apply, Other restrictions, including holiday and blackout dates, may apply, Offer is subject to change without notice. Vehicles are subject to availability, Pick-up and drop-off service is subject to geographic and other restrictions. Renter must show proof of Costco membership at time of rental. Rental must be for 26 days or less. Void where prohibited. Renter and additional driver (if applicable) must meet age, driver and credit requirements. Minimum age may vary by location. Additional restrictions and surcharges may apply actime of renters under 25 years of less. Vow where promined neminal adulturial and under the renter age, university (in application) must be for zero and adulturial and under the renter age of a new periods but the standard Costco Member Discount: Discount of 7% or 10% applies to whicles reserved in advance for rentals up to twenty-six (26) days at participating North American locations. 10% discount is not available during the following periods but the standard Costco member discount of 7% will apply: 31/13 – 4/5/13, 5/11/13 – 5/31/13, 6/29/13 – 8/23/13, 9/1/13 – 12/31/13. Rates are as posted at time of reservation at Costco com or by calling 1-877-849-2730. Weekly rates may apply depending on the length of rental or for longer rental needs. Discount does not apply to taxes, surcharges, recovery fees, and optional products and services including damage weaky rates at participating North American locations. The upgraded car class will not appear on your reservation but will be applied at no extra charge upon arrival at the rental counter if a car in the next higher class is available. This offer cannot be combined with other coupons, offers or discounted rates recept your Costco member discount. Valid through 12/31/13. Rental must be picked up by 12/30/13. Enterprise Preserved your Costco member discount. Valid through 12/31/13. Rental must be picked up by 12/30/13. Enterprise Preserved your Costco member discount. Valid through 12/31/13. Rental must be picked up by 12/30/13. Enterprise Preserved your Costco member discount. Valid through 12/31/13. Rental must be picked up by 12/30/13. Enterprise Preserved your Costco member discount. Valid through 12/31/13. Rental must be picked up by 12/30/13. Enterprise Preserved your Costco member discount. Valid through 12/31/13. Rental must be picked up by 12/30/13. Rental must be picke Travel is registered as a seller of travel in each of the states listed: California registration number: CST 2054248-50 Florida registration number: ST 32555 Hawaii registration number: TAR 5595 Iowa registration number: TA 620 · Nevada Seller of Travel registration number: 2007-0060 · Washington registration number: WST 602042600. Registration as a California Seller of Travel does not constitute approval by the state.

To book, click Travel at Costco.com or call 1-877-849-2730.

# Stock Up For... SPRING ALLERGY SEASON

Powerful, 24-Hour Non-Drowsy Allergy Relief



Live Claritin Clear.

See digital editions for video.

Claritin-D is available behind the pharmacy counter.

Selection varies by location.

WAREHOUSE ONLY | AVAILABLE NOW

### **By Sarah Torromino-Bastié**

FROM THE NORTH to the south, along the Mediterranean Sea, Italy is home to some of the most spectacular seacoast anywhere. This is particularly true in the town of Sorrento. This jewel full of beauty and traditions sits on a majestic ridge of tuff, and this volcanic rock forms a natural balcony overlooking the bay of Naples, with its gorgeous mountains and dramatic cliffs.

Sorrento is also the perfect starting point for visiting the renowned nearby marvels: Naples, Mount Vesuvius, Pompeii, Ischia, Capri and Amalfi, to name a few. It's no wonder Hollywood has chosen to feature Sorrento and its famous coastline as a backdrop for many movies.

Hiking along the rocky trails of the peninsula is a beautiful way to discover the town's amazing views. But you can also simply stroll the charming cobblestone streets of Sorrento while enjoying the sunset over the bay.

A number of churches, museums and archaeological finds kept in charming villas, as well as a lively cultural scene, await discovery in Sorrento. So does the area's celebrated specialty, limoncello, a sweet Italian liqueur made with lemon zest. And be sure to mingle with the local people, who will proudly share their timeless hospitality and traditions.

One example of the town's warm hospitality is Geppy Manniello, the director and owner of the Manniello Hotels Group and a fourth-generation member of an Italian family of hoteliers (see sidebar to the right). Manniello will share with you his everlasting love for his hometown: its beauty, the fragrance of the lemon groves that invades the medieval streets, the spots that offer unexpected vistas of the crystal-clear sea, and the peace that characterizes this unique place.

world-famous lemon groves (inset).

In regard to dining on local specialties, Manniello recommends gnocchi alla sorrentina, a potato-based pasta paired with the sweetest basil-infused tomato sauce and the best mozzarella cheese, deliciously melted throughout. When his day is over, he likes to stroll the beautiful Parco della Villa Comunale while savoring his favorite local treat: baba al limoncello, a light yeast cake baked and soaked in limoncello. Such a delight!

Sorrento is the perfect base for building a travel itinerary and discovering the marvelous Amalfi Coast. You can stay in Sorrento and take a day trip to see Europe's oldest active volcano, Mount Vesuvius. From the edge of the crater you will enjoy fantastic views over the Gulf of Naples. A visit to the world-famous archaeological sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum, two Roman towns buried by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in A.D. 79, will take you back in time. The preservation of the towns' villas, baths, shops and forum is stunning.

A tour of the dramatic Amalfi Coast, one of the most beautiful panoramas in the world and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, will take your breath away, with visits to the enchanting towns of Ravello, Amalfi and Positano.

A stay in Sorrento can let you discover the best of Italian tradition.

Sarah Torromino-Bastié is the founder of Your Travel Planner, based in Bellevue, Washington. GEPPY MANNIELLO, fourthgeneration director and owner of the Manniello Hotels Group (one of which is the Grand Hotel Ambasciatori, pictured above left), is a preferred supplier for Costco Travel, opening Sorrento's most desirable properties to Costco members.

Costco Travel is also working with Your Private Italy to offer members English-speaking private tours of the area and a number of fun activities that truly dive into Italian culture.

For instance, members can visit a mozzarella-producing farm to taste the original celebrated buffalo mozzarella. Members can share a meal with locals and learn how to prepare homemade Italian pasta or authentic Neapolitan pizza. A favorite is the tour of the largest private lemon grove on the Amalfi Coast, which includes the recipe for limoncello, a lemon-based liqueur made according to an old artisan tradition.

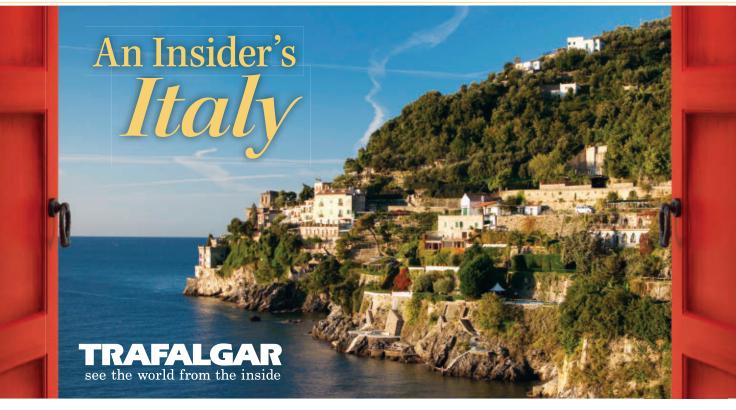
Costco Travel offers a variety of packages to Sorrento and other magical cities in Italy. Click "Travel" at Costco.com or call 1-877-849-2730.

DAVID W. SCHNEIDER View of the landmark Faraglioni (the triangular rocky outcrops) from the Giardini di Augusto on Capri.

### PLACES TO GO. PRICES YOU'LL LOVE.



QUALITY | VALUE | EXPERIENCE | WOW!



**Travel to Italy with Trafalgar** to discover the hidden places not listed in the guidebooks, the locals you wouldn't otherwise meet and traditions you may not experience on your own. Choose from 18 First Class Guided Vacations

- Savor a home-cooked meal and wine tasting on a family lemon grove estate above Sorrento.
- Choose produce from a local market for your cooking class with a professional Italian chef.
- Ascend Bramante's stepless staircase in an area of the Vatican not open to the public.

Complete with First Class hotels, coach transportation, Travel Director, sightseeing with unique Insider Experiences, many meals and more, your guided vacation offers a value-packed insider's view of Italy you just can't get anywhere else.

### SOUTHERN ITALY & SICILY 9-NIGHT PACKAGE

\$2,010 PER PERSON\*

### & VALUES OF \$340 PERSON

Rome, Pompeii, Sorrento, Capri, Salerno, Taormina, Agrigento, Palermo and more. Valid for travel 3/7/13 – 10/24/13. Pay in full by 4/30/13.

### ITALY BELLISSIMO 10-NIGHT PACKAGE

\$2,523 PER PERSON

NOCLUDES SAVINGS \$427 PER NO.

Rome, Pompeii, Sorrento, Capri, Assisi, Venice, Montecatini and more. Valid for travel 4/5/13 – 10/18/13. Pay in full by 4/30/13.

### FLAVORS OF ITALY 9-NIGHT PACKAGE

\$2,308 PER PERSON

NCLUDES SAVINGS \$201 PER

Rome, Tuscany, Parma, Bologna, Venice and more. Valid for travel 4/27/13 – 10/19/13. Pay in full by 4/30/13.

### ITALIAN CONCERTO 10-NIGHT PACKAGE

 $\$2,\!630^{\,\text{PER}}_{\,\text{PERSON}^*}$ 

### NCLUDES SAVINGS \$445 PER NO.

Rome, Pompeii, Capri, Amalfi Coast, Florence, Venice and more. Valid for travel 4/14/13 – 10/9/13. Pay in full by 4/30/13.

\*Prices reflect 10% Costco member savings. Price shown is per person based on double occupancy, land only and includes hotel taxes. Prices are in U.S. dollars, are true and accurate at time of printing, are valid for travel as specified, are valid for new bookings only and are available to Costco members residing in the United States. All offers, inclusions and accommodations are subject to availability, and may change or be terminated without notice. Seasonal surcharges, availability, blackout dates and restrictions may apply. Any unused portion(s) of inclusions are nontransferable, nonrefundable and not redeemable for cash. Cancellation and change fees may apply. Travel purchases are not included in the Executive Membership annual 2% Reward program. Costo Travel disclaims liability for any inaccuracies or typographical errors. Coravel is registered as a seller of travel in each of the states listed: California registration number: CST 2054248-50 - Florida registration number: ST 32555 - Hawaii registration number: TAR 5595 - lows cregistration number: MT 602042600. Registration as a California Seller of Travel does not constitute approval by the state.

13TR0410 12/12

## SHOP COSTCO.COM FOR THOUSANDS OF ITEMS YOU WON'T FIND IN YOUR LOCAL COSTCO.





### Portofino Signature 8-Piece Set

Includes two-piece sofa, coffee and side table, two club chairs and two ottomans. All-weather woven resin wicker with Sunbrella fabric.

**2,499.99 Delivered** #175068 Costco.com only.





### **Portofino Signature** Moda 4-Piece Modular Sectional

Includes two-piece sectional and two ottomans. All-weather woven resin wicker with Sunbrella fabric. Versatile and comfortable, with multiple configurations.

\$1,599.99 Delivered After \$200 OFF Valid 2/21/13-3/17/13 #722654 Costco.com only.



### **Portofino Signature** 6-Piece Modular Deep Seating Set in Weathered Gray

Includes two ottomans, two armless chairs, corner chair and coffee table. All-weather woven resin wicker with Sunbrella fabric.

\$1,999.99 Delivered

Valid 2/21/13-3/17/13 #686921 Costco.com only.



### **SunSetter Oasis** Freestanding Awning

Perfect for lawns, decks, patios, poolside or any location where you want cool shade and protection. Available in motorized or manually operated models, in 12' x 10' or 16' x 10'. Available in 16 woven acrylic fabric colors.

### **Up to \$350 OFF** Valid 2/21/13-3/17/13 #11516290 Costco.com only.

Motorized models operate by remote control



### Niko 18-Piece Estate Set by Sirio

Includes six-piece seating set, seven-piece dining set, three-piece club chair set, two hydraulic loungers and two bonus side tables. All-weather woven resin wicker with Sunbrella fabric.

\$4,999.99 Delivered #650996 Costco.com only.





### Valentine 3-Piece Swivel Bistro Set by Sirio Includes two swivel chairs and table. All-weather woven resin wicker with Sunbrella fabric.

**\$699.99 Delivered** #494061 Costco.com only.





Price and availability are subject to change without notice. Products may include a shipping and handling charge. For details, visit the product page on www.costco.com. Most online coupons at www.costco.com are manufacturers' coupons. State sales tax may be due on the prediscounted price of the item when purchased using an online coupon. These taxes, if any, are in addition to the amount that you are paying for the product. Prices, specifications, availability and terms of offers are subject to change without notice. Taxes and shipping charges are extra, and vary. "Using the product search box located at www.costco.com, please enter the provided search phrase to find the product[s]. Products shipped to Alaska, Hawaii or Puerto Rico will include an additional shipping and handling fee. This fee will be quoted at checkout.

\$1,999.99 Delivered #644261 Costco.com only.



### your email address BECOME A COSTCO.COM INSIDER!

Give us your email address and be the first to know about new items and online-only coupon offers.





### Moderno 6-Piece Deep Seating Set

Includes two club chairs, loveseat, ottoman, end table and coffee table. All-weather woven resin wicker with Sunbrella fabric.

\$1,199.99 Delivered After \$200 OFF

Valid 2/21/13-3/17/13 #581992 Costco.com only.





Create multiple configurations, including an oversized outdoor daybed. All-weather woven resin wicker with Sunbrella fabric.

\$1,599.99 Delivered After \$200 OFF Valid 3/7/13-3/31/13 #494650 Costco.com only.





### Saratoga 11-Piece Cushioned Dining Set

Includes eight chairs, two swivel chairs and table. Heavy-duty, fully welded aluminum construction with an intricate, cast-aluminum design and Sunbrella fabric cushions.

**\$3,799.99 Delivered** #515271 Costco.com only.



Tahoe 5-Piece Dining Set

Includes dining table and four dining chairs. Cast-aluminum construction with elegant rose design.

5899.99 Delivered #383542 Costco.com only.



design with Sunbrella fabric cushions.

\$449.99 Delivered Valid 2/27/13-3/31/13 #740251 Costco.com only.

## SHOP COSTCO.COM FOR THOUSANDS OF ITEMS YOU WON'T FIND IN YOUR LOCAL COSTCO.











\$2,699.99 Delivered #646104 Costco.com only.





Valid 2/21/13-3/17/13 #717243 Costco.com only.



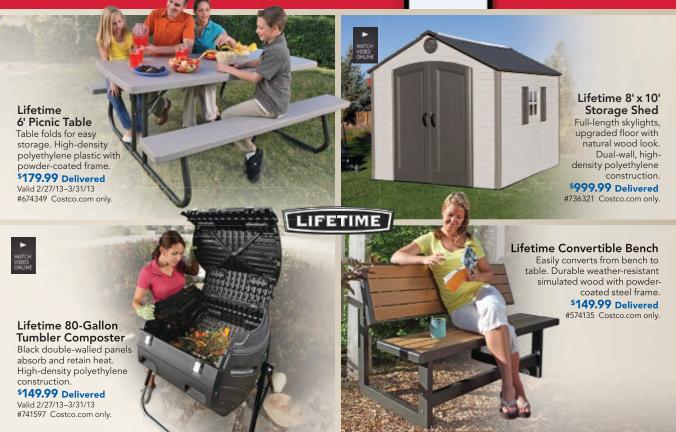
### 201/304 Grade Stainless **Steel Patio Heater** 46,000 BTU output and Piezo ignition system. Wheel kit included.

**\$169.99** Delivered After \$30 OFF Valid 3/7/13-3/31/13 #645541 Costco.com only.

### SPECIAL OFFERS VIA TEXT MESSAGE

Sign up to receive special offers via text and we will send them right to your phone! Text COSTCO2 to 71034 now!





Message and data rates may apply

**Urban Island** Stainless Steel Drop-In 4-Burner Grill by Bull Outdoor **Products** 

- 75,000 total BTU
- 600 sq. in. total grilling area
- Available in natural gas or liquid propane models

5999.99 Delivered #441695 Costco.com only.



### **Urban Island** Stainless Steel Drop-in 5-Burner Grill by Bull Outdoor Products

- 90,000 total BTU
- 741 sq. in. total grilling area
- Available in natural gas or liquid propane models

\$1,199.99 Delivered #569720 Costco.com only.







### EasyOn Gutter Guard

Gutter Guard installs easily on your gutters. Constructed with a high-grade stainless steel micro-mesh. Available in 24' or 100' lengths.

Starting at \$54.99 Delivered Valid 3/1/13-3/31/13 Search\*: GUTTERMARC

Costco.com only.

## SHOP COSTCO.COM FOR THOUSANDS OF ITEMS YOU WON'T FIND IN YOUR LOCAL COSTCO.









models available. Amish construction. Includes flower boxes.

Up to \$500 OFF Valid 2/25/13-3/31/13 Search\*: SUNCASTMARC Costco.com only.





Price and availability are subject to change without notice. Products may include a shipping and handling charge. For details, visit the product page on www.costco.com. Most online coupons at www.costco.com are manufacturers' coupons. State sales tax may be due on the prediscounted price of the item when purchased using an online coupon. These taxes, if any, are in addition to the amount that you are paying for the product. Prices, specifications, availability and terms of offers are subject to change without notice. Taxes and shipping charges are extra, and vary. "Using the product search box located at www.costco.com, please enter the provided search phrase to find the product[s]. Products shipped to Alaska, Hawaii or Puerto Rico will include an additional shipping and handling fee. This fee will be quoted at checkout.

### **GET THE COSTCO APP TODAY**

And enjoy everything Costco on the go Now available from iTunes and Google Play.





**Spalding** 54" Acrylic Portable Basketball System

Pro Slam breakaway rim, Exacta height lift system and authenticstyle board pad.

\$299.99 Delivered After \$80 OFF Valid 2/21/13-3/17/13

#628775 Costco.com only.







Lifetime 54" In-Ground **Basketball System** • 3 mm Makrolon

polycarbonate backboard • Slam-it Pro rim Power-lift height

**Basketball System** Shatterproof backboard, spring-back-action rim and easy one-hand height adjustment.

Lifetime 52" XL Portable

**\$299.99** Delivered

Valid 3/1/13–3/31/13 #565131 Costco.com only.

\$299.99 Delivered Valid 3/1/13-3/31/13

#713595 Costco.com only.

adjustment

LIFETIME





TRINITY 4-Tier Black Rack

NSF certified. 600 lb. weight capacity per shelf. Includes shelf liners and wheels.

\$79.99 Delivered After \$20 OFF Valid 2/21/13-3/17/13

# SHOP COSTCO.COM FOR THOUSANDS OF ITEMS YOU WON'T FIND IN YOUR LOCAL COSTCO.

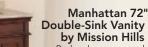




### Manhattan 60" **Double-Sink Vanity** by Mission Hills

Red mahogany wood finish with Brazilian Giallo Veneziano granite. Faucets not included. **\$999.99** Delivered

Valid 2/21/13-3/17/13 #498100 Costco.com only.



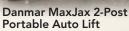
Red mahogany wood finish with Brazilian Giallo Veneziano granite. Faucets not included.

\$1,299.99 Delivered Valid 2/21/13-3/17/13 #725661 Costco.com only.





Starting at \$64.99 Delivered Valid 3/1/13-3/31/13 #11262818 Costco.com only.



6,000 lb. lift capacity, industrialgrade hydraulic cylinders and fully adjustable lift arms.

\$1,999.99 Delivered Valid 3/1/13-3/31/13 #629573 Costco.com only.



### Q-See 8-Channel Surveillance System

- Eight high-resolution 600 TVL cameras with 120' night vision and 60'/100' cables
- Full D1 recording resolution
- 1TB hard drive
- HDMI output and remote monitoring

\$399.99 Delivered #689454 Costco.com only.



Slide-A-Shell



### MotoFloor Modular Garage Flooring

Available in black/white combo, black/alloy combo or charcoal gray. Includes 48 1' x 1' tiles.

### \$99.99 Delivered After \$40 OFF

Valid 2/21/13-3/17/13 #11038308 Costco.com only.

### your email address BECOME A COSTCO.COM INSIDER!

Give us your email address and be the first to know about new items and online-only coupon offers.





### **NewAge Products Pro Series** 10-Piece Workshop/Garage Cabinetry

Heavy-duty 18-gauge powder-coated steel finish with black frame with gray doors or gray frame with taupe doors.

\$2,299.99 Valid 3/7/13-3/31/13

Search\*: NEWAGEMARC Costco.com only.



### **NewAge Products Pro Series Heavy-Duty Shelving Rack**

Industrial wire grid racks and frames for maximum durability. Up to 1,000 lb. weight capacity per shelf.

**\$199.99** Delivered After \$70 OFF Valid 3/7/13-3/31/13

#712680 Costco.com only.



### NewAge Products Bold VersaShelf **Shelving Rack**

Sturdy steel grid and wood shelving. Up to 200 lb. weight capacity per shelf.

### \$79.99 Delivered

Valid 3/7/13-3/31/13 #712720 Costco.com only.



### Wellington 5-Piece Queen Bedroom Set

Includes bed, two nightstands, dresser and mirror. **52,999.99 Delivered** Valid 3/1/13–3/31/13 #739080 Costco.com only. Other sizes/configurations available. Price varies by size/configuration.





### Parkston 5-Piece Queen Bedroom Set

Includes bed, two nightstands, drawer chest and lingerie chest. **52,399.99 Delivered** Valid 3/1/13–3/31/13 #723421 Costco.com only. Other sizes/configurations available. Price varies by size/configuration.



IRONMAN Bedding and Pillows
Official bedding of IRONMAN with Celliant technology. Products containing Celliant have been clinically proven to increase blood flow and tissue oxygen levels and assist in balancing temperature.

Starting at \$68.99 Delivered Search\*: IRONMANMARC Costco.com only.



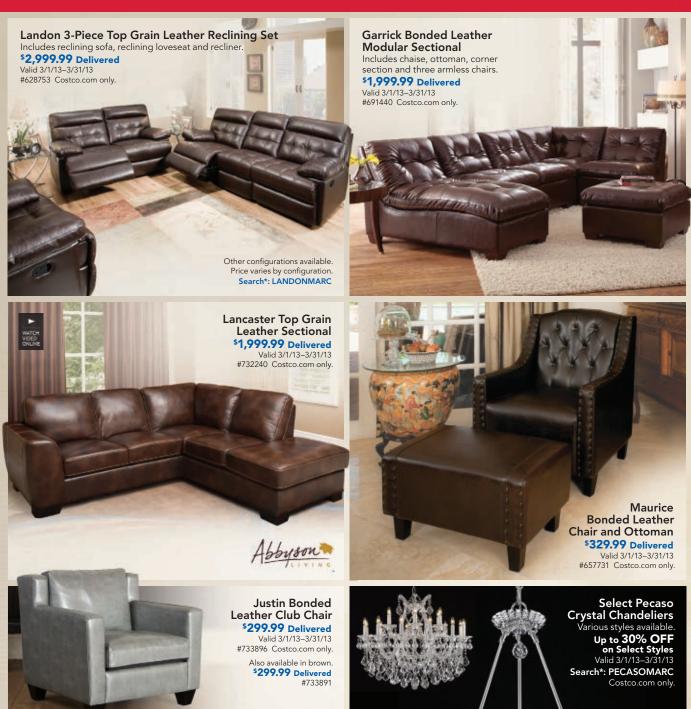


### iRobot Roomba 595 Pet Vacuum **Cleaning Robot**

AeroVac technology, two Auto virtual walls, three extra AeroVac filters and two complete sets of brushes.

\$299.99 Delivered #657550 Warehouse and Costco.com.

## SHOP COSTCO.COM FOR THOUSANDS OF ITEMS YOU WON'T FIND IN YOUR LOCAL COSTCO.







### SPECIAL OFFERS VIA TEXT MESSAGE

Sign up to receive special offers via text and we will send them right to your phone! Text COSTCO2 to 71034 now!

Message and data rates may apply.







Includes 8' slate table, conversion top and play package with woolen pool table cloth. Various table cloth colors available.

\$1,999.99 Delivered

Valid 3/7/13-3/31/13 #509925 Costco.com only.





### Cedar Green 96" Complete Closet Kit

Fits 4' to 8' wide, all U.S.-grown cedar, 14" deep shelving. **\$399.99** Delivered After \$150 OFF

Valid 2/21/13-3/17/13 #634095 Costco com only



### **American Comfort** Titanium Heater

1,500 watts. Heats up to a 1,000 sq. ft. room. Built-in air purifier with UV-C and Tio(2) technology.

\$199.99 Delivered Valid 2/1/13-3/31/13



### Feit Electric LED and CFL Light Bulbs

Costco.com only.

Various types available. **LEDs Starting at** \$39.99 Delivered per 4-Pack **CFLs Starting at** \$18.99 Delivered per 6-Pack Search\*: FEITMARC



Life+Gear 400-Lumen Flashlight with Flashing Tailcap 2-Pack \$89.99 Delivered After \$30 OFF

Valid 2/21/13-3/17/13 #580615 Costco.com only.



### 12-14 oz. **Lobster Tails 4-Pack** by Atwood Lobster

Atwood lobsters are caught in the clear, cold coastal waters of the U.S. and Canada. The tails are processed from live lobsters at the peak of freshness. Wednesday through Friday delivery.

**\$139.99** Delivered

#726470 Costco.com only.



### Wildcatch Copper River Sockeye Salmon, 2012 Šeason 6-Pack

9 lb. minimum net weight. Ships frozen. **\$124.99** Delivered #314967 Costco.com only.



Ryuu Damascus VG-10 8-Piece Knife Set with Block **\$349.99** Delivered #728976 Costco.com only.

### **Select Original HP Toners**

HP toners assist in creating professional-looking prints. . Valid 3/1/13-3/31/13

**For Current Offers** Search\*: HPMARC Costco.com only.









### HP dv7t Quad Blu-ray 17.3" Laptop

- Intel Core i7 processor 16GB memory
- Backlit keyboard
- 1TB hard drive
- 10-key numeric keypad HDMI

### \$899.99 After \$350 OFF

Valid 3/7/13-3/31/13 #729204



- 15.6" Laptop • Intel Core
- i7 processor • 8GB memory
- 1TB hard drive
- 1GB graphics
- Backlit keyboard
- 10-key numeric keypad

\$849.99 After \$150 OFF Valid 3/7/13-3/31/13 #728758



intel

CORE 17

### Toshiba L855 15.6" Laptop

- Intel Core i7 processor 8GB memory • 10-key numeric keypad • 750GB hard drive
- HDMÍ

### \$599.99 After \$150 OFF

Valid 3/7/13-3/31/13 #728752

### TOSHIBA

Leading Innovation >>>



Aspire V5 Touch

Costco.com only.

A. Aquamarine Solitaire Pendant 14kt white gold.

5399.99 Delivered

D. Round Diamond **Double Row Eternity Bracelet** (6.40 ctw)

18kt white gold. \$7,499.99 Delivered B. Aquamarine and **Diamond Ring** 14kt white gold.

\$999.99 Delivered

E. Princess Cut and **Round Diamond** Wedding Set (1.45 ctw) Platinum.

\$6,499.99 Delivered

C. Round Diamond Cross Necklace (0.95 ctw) 14kt white gold.

\$1,399.99 Delivered

F. Round Diamond **Hoop Earrings** (1.45 ctw) 14kt yellow gold.

\$1,999.99 Delivered #706061







All diamonds are minimum VS2 clarity, I color. All items Costco.com only.

Price and availability are subject to change without notice. Products may include a shipping and handling charge. For details, visit the product page on www.costco.com. Most online coupons at www.costco.com are manufacturers' coupons. State sales tax may be due on the prediscounted price of the item when purchased using an online coupon. These taxes, if any, are in addition to the amount that you are paying for the product. Prices, specifications, availability and terms of offers are subject to change without notice. Taxes and shipping charges are extra, and vary. "Using the product search box located at www.costco.com, please enter the provided search phrase to find the product[s]. Products shipped to Alaska, Hawaii or Puerto Rico will include an additional shipping and handling fee. This fee will be quoted at checkout.

# HEART SMRT.



- Higher potency for a higher level of heart support\*
- Helps maintain proper circulation and promote heart health\*
- Helps maintain healthy bloodpressure levels already within a normal range\*
- Helps support energy production within the heart, brain and muscles\*



Visit our full-service pharmacy for all of your prescription, health and wellness needs.



USP has tested and verified select Kirkland Signature™ supplements for their ingredients, potency and manufacturing process. USP sets official standards for dietary supplements. See www.usp-dsvp.org.



# Not all cotton is created equal



Our Kirkland Signature Pima cotton t-shirts for women and men are made out of the finest cotton available to resist fading, pilling, wrinkling and shrinkage. Comfortable for any season and versatile for any occasion, they are soft, strong, and durable. *Exclusively from Costco Wholesale*.





# Driving an easy bargain

### **By. T. Foster Jones**

I HAVE MET exactly one person in my life who actually enjoys haggling at a car dealership. Me? Not so much. Who wants that tension, that back-and-forth, the "let me go into the back and ask my manager about your offer (again)" game playing that can go on for hours before you've even begun any paperwork.

When the time came for me to start looking at new cars, it made sense that as someone who has written about the Costco Auto Program in the past, it was time for me to give the program a thorough test drive.

My reasons for being drawn to the Costco Auto Program were multifold.

First, it's simple. You go to Costco.com, click on "Services," then click on "Costco Auto Program." Shop for the car (or cars) you're interested in, and locate the nearby dealer(s). An authorized dealer contact from the dealership you select will contact you by phone and/or email to make an appointment.

### Connecting

For more information about the Costco Auto Program, visit Costco.com and search "CAP12" or call 1-800-458-1692. Costco and its affiliates do not sell automobiles or negotiate individual transactions. Members must purchase from a participating dealer. Second, there's the no-haggle aspect. The Costco Auto Program has low, prearranged pricing with participating dealers. You go in, test-drive the car, they show you the price sheet and, if you like it, off you go.

And third, the prearranged price is usually much better than anything you are likely to get otherwise—even if you were willing to put in several hours of hard bargaining.

So, off I went to the Costco Auto Program website, which lets you browse by make, body type, price, new or pre-owned, luxury, gas mileage and more. There is a car-comparison feature so you can better see what advantages and disadvantages exist for one car over another. You can check out specs and features, colors and photos, as well as safety and warranty information. The site even allows you to preselect options (color, trim, interior, etc.) and shows you what options are already included. This allows the authorized dealer contact to see which options you prefer so you are most likely to be shown exactly the car you're looking for.

Having just sold my car of 10 years, a 2000 Honda gas/electric Insight, I was interested in staying with some kind of hybrid vehicle. After looking at several models, I ended up selecting a new Honda Insight and a Toyota Prius C. I chose my colors and options, and hit "Locate a Dealer."

In both cases I was supplied with names of more than one authorized Costco dealer contact for each dealership, and informed that I would be contacted within 24 hours and that I needed to print out the page and bring it with me to the dealership. The dealers both called and emailed, and we set up appointments for the following day.

It's important to remember that when you go to the dealership, you ask for the specific person you made the appointment with. Don't just announce, "I'm here for the Costco deal," as you may end up with whatever salesperson is available, and that person may not be entirely familiar with the process.

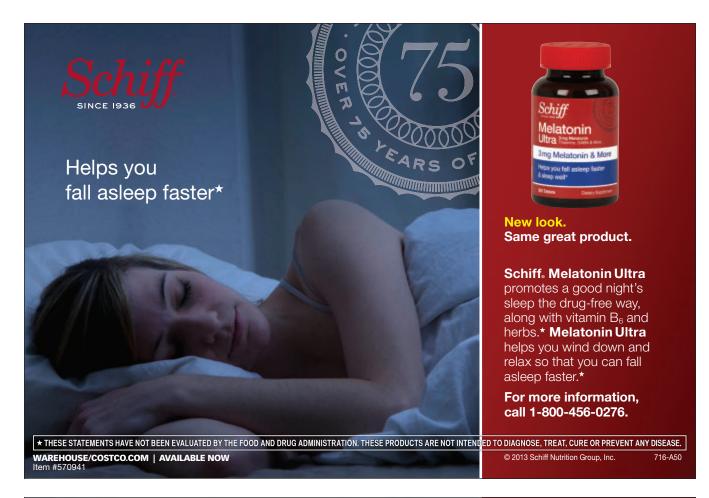
At each dealership, I met with my contact, who asked to see my Costco card. We confirmed the models I wanted to look at, test-drove them, then went over the numbers. By "went over," I mean I was shown the member-only price sheet, which shows the prearranged Costco price. At that point, one can say "OK," and start the paperwork, or "I want to think about this, discuss it with my spouse, etc.," and it's done. No arm-twisting, no delays, no "What's it going to take to get you into a car today?" kind of experience.

I was in the latter category. I still wanted to look around. I needed to talk with my wife, and we're in the process of moving, so there were other factors to consider.

Two days later, I received a follow-up email and phone call from both contacts, asking if I needed any additional information, and explaining that they were available to answer any questions. That was it. I felt respected, not harassed.

All in all, I was most impressed by how relaxed and smoothly run the experience was. This may not have been the week for me to buy a car through the Costco Auto Program, but when I'm ready, I know it's there for me.











# WHEN YOU CAN'T TAKE THE HEARTBURN, TAKE KIRKLAND SIGNATURE LANSOPRAZOLE.

Stop being one of the 50 million Americans suffering from heartburn and start taking our leading heartburn treatment recommended by physicians. Kirkland Signature Lansoprazole 15 mg delayed-release capsules offer effective heartburn relief—24 hours a day!

### A Dose of Quality and Value!

Exclusively from Costco Wholesale
WAREHOUSE ONLY | AVAILABLE NOW
Item #650402





IF THE TRUEEARNINGS Card from Costco and American Express is your credit card of choice, then right now you're probably making a list of ways to spend your annual reward coupon. Maybe it will be on an experience like the one Costco members Ron and Kathleen C. of Manhattan Beach, California, posted on the site www.mytrueearnings.com: "We used our TrueEarnings reward to help pay for a vacation cruise to Alaska to see the Northern Lights and treated ourselves to a stateroom with a balcony."

With a TrueEarnings card, you earn cash back every year from your purchases and receive your reward in February. The reward coupon is attached to the last page of the card's February paper billing statement (if you've gone to paperless billing, you will still receive

a mailed paper February statement with your reward). The amount of the annual rebate is based on your card usage and is easy to remember. Just think 3-2-1: 3 percent cash back on gasoline, 2 percent on charges for travel and U.S. restaurants, and 1 percent on other purchases, including those made at Costco.

"Members tell us they really value receiving these rewards," says Lauren Kutschka, Costco's credit card relations manager. "Some people use them for essentials, but for most it's a chance for that special splurge item they've had their eye on in their local warehouse."

That's what Amy from Memphis did, according to her note on the TrueEarnings website: "My reward check came right in time for my birthday. I purchased a new camera at Costco for our upcoming trip to London and Dublin and what a fantastic purchase! It takes wonderful pictures and I have wonderful memories that will last a lifetime!"

Members use their reward coupon in lots of creative ways. Some exchange them for cash to spend on a special trip, wedding expenses or even to purchase necessities.

Allison from Reno shared, "We recently

changed medical insurance companies to save some money, and my husband no longer has vision coverage. Fortunately, the American Express/Costco Rebate check arrived at the very time he needed new glasses. Our rebate check covered all but \$5 of a very nice new pair at Costco Optical! We LOVE shopping at Costco, and this annual rebate makes our membership even more of a savings!"

Jennifer from Clarkston, Michigan, was one of many members who donated the proceeds of their rebate to the less fortunate. She wrote, "As much as I would have loved to get some fabulous item that I really want, instead I bought supplies from a wish list provided online for a local organization providing services to low-income families. Feels very good, feels right."

If you don't currently have a TrueEarnings Card, it's easy to apply. You can sign up at the membership counter at your local warehouse or online at Costco.com. On Costco. com, click on "Credit

Card" under "Membership" at the bottom of the home page. The TrueEarnings Card doubles as your Costco membership card, and there is no additional fee.

"I love my [TrueEarnings] Amex [card]," wrote Felisa from Jackson Heights, New York. "I use it for almost everything. I enjoy having one card that is welcomed almost everywhere I go. I enjoy the peace of mind of the extra benefits such as purchase protection, auto rental, etc. When other merchants try to lure me with their own cards I start listing the benefits of my Amex—then I really sound like a commercial. And oh yes, I love my cash back—I got \$725!"—Anita Thompson

### **The Costco Connection**

Visit www.mytrueeamings.com to learn complete details about the TrueEarnings Card, calculate your potential rebate and read more members' stories (or share your own).



### WITH METHYLCOBALAMIN-A FORM OF B-12 THAT IS READY TO GO\*

- Methylcobalamin is an active form of B-12.
- It helps facilitate energy production.\*
- It helps support the nervous system.\*
- It is great-tasting too!

\*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

Exclusively from Costco Wholesale
WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM | AVAILABLE NOW | Nam #690843







# Pima, the king of cottons

BROWSING THROUGH MY local Costco the other day, I came across Kirkland Signature™ Pima cotton T-shirts. They were beautiful, vibrant, colorful and soft. But even though I'd seen the description "Pima cotton" before, I had no idea what it signified.

A little digging told me that Pima cotton is named after the Pima Indians, who first grew it in the U.S., but its origins date back to its cultivation in Peru as far back as 3,100 B.C.

Peruvian Pima cotton is prized around the world as a luxury fiber and is called *gamuza*, which means "suede" in Spanish, and refers to the material's velvety feel.

With any natural fiber, the longer and

smoother the filament, the softer the "hand," as those in the fashion industry say, referring to softness to the touch. Because of its exceptionally long, 1%-inch staple length (ordinary cotton fibers measure between ½ and ¾ inch), Peruvian Pima cotton is silky soft, extremely durable and highly resistant to pilling. Similar to Egyptian cotton, albeit a little shorter, Pima can be spun into fine thread that can be woven or knitted to create dense, soft fabrics.

All these features are why Costco chose Pima cotton for its Kirkland Signature T-shirts, says Rosanne Peters, buyer for women's clothing. "The quality of these shirts is world class. The Lima, Peru, factory where our T-shirts are manufactured has been a family-owned business for more than 120 years, and is one of the oldest and largest apparel factories in the country."

All stages of manufacturing are conducted under its roof, from spinning the yarns to sewing the finished garment, providing the ability to monitor and control quality at every step. Fabrics and garments are sent to an external, world-renowned testing laboratory to ensure that they meet Costco's stringent quality requirements. After passing all quality-assurance inspections, each garment receives a final hand inspection.

"These steps ensure that our members receive only the highest-quality garment," says Tryna O'Neil, men's clothing buyer. "No detail has been left out in making our men's and women's Kirkland Signature Peruvian Pima cotton T-shirt." —T. Foster Jones

### **The Costco Connection**

The women's Kirkland Signature Pima cotton V-neck T-shirt is available in regular and plus sizes. The men's T-shirt is available in sizes S-XXL. Both men's and women's come in a variety of colors.



# go ahead, EAT 2 PER DAY





Kirkland Signature Sugar-Free Calcium Chews are a delicious way to support the health of your bones, teeth, and muscles.† Each sugar-free chew features 500 mg of calcium plus vitamin D and vitamin K—and they taste great!

- Supports strong bones and teeth<sup>†</sup>
- Supports muscle health<sup>†</sup>
- Involved in heart and nerve function<sup>†</sup>
- May reduce the risk of osteoporosis\*

† These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

<sup>\*</sup> Adequate calcium throughout life, as part of a well-balanced diet, may reduce the risk of osteoporosis later in life

# TAKE THE BURN OUT OF HEARTBURN

Compare to the active ingredient in Zantac 150® tablets.\*



- Just one pill prevents and relieves heartburn.
- Can be taken up to two times daily to relieve your heartburn.

Refer to the Drug Facts on the package for warnings and other important information.

(190 doses)

Exclusively from Costco Wholesale WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM | AVAILABLE NOW





### **BuyingSmart**

Tracy Schneider fills March's consumer reporter slot with a behind-the-scenes look at a popular Kirkland Signature product. Send your questions about this article to:

buyingsmart@costco.com.

### **By Tracy Schneider**

THERE ARE MANY ways to define sustainability. When it comes to aquaculture, sustainability simply means the responsible farming of seafood. It is the raising of healthy farmed fish and shrimp with minimal environmental or social impact over the long term. Farms must take into account issues of water quality and waste removal, disease and antibiotic use, deforestation and wetland degradation.

The question is, whether you are looking at seafood, chocolate or coffee, what does it take to create sustainability?

In 2007, as part of the company's seafood program, Costco was already actively involved in monitoring the shrimp supply chain, but from the processing side as opposed to the farmers'.

Over time Ken Kimble, Costco's assistant general merchandising manager of corporate foods, and the Costco team—which is composed of corporate and regional buyers around the world—came to understand that ensuring the quality of Kirkland Signature™ shrimp went far beyond the processing stage. It could only be as good as the quality of the farmed product itself. And that meant working toward ensuring sustainability, from hatchery to Costco.

"We learned that we needed to become experts in every aspect of the supply chain: hatchery, farming,

feeding mills and processors," says Ken. It was the only way to consistently provide Costco with the highestquality shrimp, raised and processed in the most environmentally responsible way. And it was a big job. Nearly half of the seafood consumed in the world comes from farms. There were too many farms and no set of standards.

Because of the enormousness of the challenge, the team realized that Costco couldn't single-handedly change the way shrimp was farmed. So the company turned to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF; www.worldwildlife.org), the largest independent conservation organization in the world.

### **Encouraging sustainable farming**

The WWF began to tackle seafood aquaculture in 2006 through a series of roundtable discussions known as the Aquaculture Dialogues, which convened 2,200 farmers, retailers, NGOs, scientists and other important stakeholders to develop standards for responsibly farmed seafood.

The dialogue process is all-encompassing and complex. The goal is to build consensus around environmental and social standards for responsibly farmed seafood, the end result of that consensus being a rigorous set of standards that minimize the

negative impacts of fish farming, deforestation, antibiotic use and biodiversity, and encourage sustainable practices such as maintaining water quality and reducing the spread of disease.

These standards have been handed over to the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), an independent nonprofit that implements and manages farm-certification pro-

grams. It is also responsible for working with independent third-party auditors to certify farms that adopt the standards. The ASC now upholds the environmental and social standards for farmed abalone, clams, mussels, oysters and scallops, pangasius (a type of catfish), salmon, tilapia and freshwater trout (see "Sustainable farm-raised fish").

To verify that the seafood Costco provides to members is

responsibly farmed, the company encourages its suppliers to become certified. To that end, the fish farms that supply Costco undergo an audit with the Institute for Marketecology (IMO), an independent auditor based in Switzerland. The IMO inspects the farms to see how they are complying with WWF standards. When a farm meets all the certification requirements, it receives a seal of approval from the ASC.

"These are just the first steps," says Tracy Mauldin-Avery, Costco vice president and general merchandising manager of corporate foods. "The process of establishing aquaculture practices is just getting started—we all have a long way to go."

### **Shrimp aquaculture**

The WWF's Shrimp Aquaculture Dialogues began in 2007 and have led to the

development of global standards for shrimp farming. The shrimp standards are expected to be handed over to the ASC during the first half of 2013

Among the requirements that farmers must meet are the following: Comply with all applicable national and local laws and regulations; site farms in environmentally suitable locations while conserving biodiversity and

important natural ecosystems; develop and operate farms with consideration for surrounding communities; operate farms with responsible labor practices; manage shrimp health and welfare in a responsible manner; manage broodstock (mature stock used for breeding) origin and selection and the effects of stock management; use resources in an environmentally efficient and responsible manner. (For the full list, go to the

WWF's website and search "standards.")

Costco has been actively involved, working with the ASC to evaluate the organization's new certification process by field-testing the standards on several farms in Thailand that supply its Kirkland Signature shrimp.

And that is only the beginning.

"Fifteen years ago, Costco made annual food-safety audits mandatory," notes Bill Mardon, Costco's general manager for seafood. "Ten years ago, social audits, to assure fair wages and hiring practices, became mandatory as well. Today Costco is focusing its efforts on sustainability."

For the benefit of Costco members, the farmers and the environment, Costco is in the business of sustainability for the long haul.

Tracy Schneider lives with her husband and daughter in Washington state.

# Sustainable farm-raised fish

### **Tilapia**

Regal Springs Tilapia Group is the oldest integrated tilapia producer in the world and supplies all of Kirkland Signature's frozen tilapia loins. Since its founding, some 25 years ago, Regal Springs has made a point of working with local farmers, and over the years it has adopted social and food-safety practices as they were introduced.

Early on, Regal Springs worked with the World Wildlife Fund, on the steering committee, to create the standards for growing tilapia, says Francisco Murillo, chief business development officer of Regal Springs. And the company has been at the forefront of compliance as well

"We were the first of the tilapia production companies to adopt and implement ASC environmental standards—and to be audited by a third party," Murillo says.

### Salmon

Sustainability is fundamental to Norway's Hofseth AS, one of the suppliers of Kirkland Signature frozen salmon fillets.

"There are strict government controls on farming fish," says CEO Geir Håberg. The density of the cages, for example, is highly regulated—only 2.5 percent biomass (biological material from living organisms, most often referring to plants) is allowed—and there are huge penalties for going over that amount.

In Norway, most information is public. As a result, the entire history of any salmon is available for general viewing in the public records. Every fish is fully traceable, from its beginning in the hatchery, to its early phase in fresh water, to its maturation in salt water.

"You can go all the way back to the mother and the father of the salmon," says Håberg.—TS

### Identifying reliable processors

"The process of

establishing aqua-

culture practices is

just getting started—

we all have a long

way to go."

—Tracy Mauldin-Avery

ARMED WITH thermometers and a few pairs of watchful eyes, the seafood team can determine within two to four hours if a processor—whether it's in Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Guatemala, Nicaragua or Ecuador—will meet Costco's exacting standards. "Freshness," says team leader Ken Kimble, "has a direct relationship with time and temperature."

The team is looking for more than basic cleanliness. They observe the state of the shrimp as it arrives at the processor. They take its temperature. They ask questions. How long has the shrimp been on the truck? What is the ice-to-shrimp ratio?

Then they watch the production line. Is the catch quickly processed or left to wait in tubs on the floor? They observe the various steps: deheading, peeling and rinsing, deveining, cooking. Does the team identify deviations in quality?

"Controls have to be in place so that, if there is a problem, the product can be pulled off the production line," says Ken.—TS

Ken Kimble (far right) examines the latest shrimp harvest at one of the farms in Thailand.



# **Catch Some Vitamin D**



Important for strong bones and teeth, Kirkland Signature Vitamin D3 also supports muscle and immune system health.<sup>†</sup> Kirkland Signature Vitamin D3—the body's preferred form of vitamin D— is a great way to ensure you are getting enough of this essential vitamin to be healthy.<sup>†</sup>

- Supports the immune system<sup>†</sup>
- Beneficial for the health of bones<sup>†</sup>

† These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

Vitamin D is known as the sunshine vitamin because the body makes vitamin D when the skin is exposed to sunlight. Scientists learned about the importance of this vitamin when it was discovered in the early 1900s by Dr. Elmer McCollum, Dr. Edward Mellanby, and others during their research on rickets. Rickets is a debilitating bone disease that disabled many children. Over the past century, the crucial role of vitamin D in bone health has been well established. Results from a rigorous review of 167 studies showed that vitamin D at a minimum of 700 to 1,000 IU daily combined with calcium was associated with better bone mineral density, reduced fracture risk, and reduced risk of falls.<sup>1</sup>

Interestingly, in the past few decades, scientists have linked numerous non-bone modern-day health concerns to low vitamin D levels. For example, research has discovered a correlation between weakened immune systems and low vitamin D levels in the blood, suggesting a possible need for supplementation.<sup>2</sup> To help maintain a healthy immune system, talk to your healthcare professional about having your vitamin D level evaluated to ensure your vitamin D levels are adequate. Vitamin D supplementation may be necessary, particularly during the winter months, when sunlight exposure is significantly decreased.

Vitamin D is a unique micronutrient, acting as a hormone once it is in the body. Vitamin D regulates over 500 genes and has been discovered in most tissues of the body.<sup>3</sup> Vitamin D has been proven to be a key ingredient for overall well-being. Since few foods naturally contain vitamin D, many people spend most of their time indoors, and fortified foods contain minimal amounts of this nutrient, vitamin D supplementation is recommended for maintaining optimal health.

<sup>1.</sup> Cranney A, Horsley T, O'Donnell S, et al. Effective and Safety of Vitamin D in Relation to Bone Health. Evidence Report/Technology Assessment No. 158 (Prepared by the University of Ottawa Evidence-based Practice Center (UO-EPC) under Contract No. 290-02-0021. AHRQ Publication No. 07-E013. Rockville, MD: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. August 2007.

<sup>2.</sup> Tangpricha AV, Desai NS, Blumberg HM, et al. Vitamin D for Treatment and Prevention of Infectious Diseases: A Systematic Review of Randomized Controlled Trials. Endocr Pract. 2009;15(5):438-49.

<sup>3.</sup> Holick MF. Vitamin D: A D-lightful Solution for Health. J Investig Med. 2011;59(6):872-80.





### Cabidor® Classic **Storage Cabinet**

The Cabidor Classic creates additional storage in your home or office without sacrificing any floor or wall space. It conveniently and easily mounts behind any standard door by using the hinge pins and the patented hanging hardware. Installs in minutes, is completely portable and has a variety of uses. Cabidor offers the storage of five medicine cabinets. Cabinet includes six adjustable shelves, two fixed shelves and eight retention rods for taller items. Dimensions: 70" H x 16" W x 4" D. Item #732110. Costco.com only.



### **FOCUS ON:**

### **Kirkland Signature Pruning Shears**

THE KIRKLAND SIGNATURE™ Pruning Shears set can help you get your yard in shape. "Sharp, SK5 steel blades with contoured, forged aluminum handles make these pruning shears sturdy for any garden task and durable enough to last a lifetime," says Costco buyer Amber Dodge.

Included in the set are the two pruning shears, a carbide sharpening tool, lubricant and two replacement blades and springs for each shear. Comparable shears plus sharpening tool and replacement blades and springs together retail for more than \$162," Amber says. "We are showing an 84 percent savings over retail with our set." Item #935202.





### D. Decorative Cotton Pillow 2-Pack

These 20" x 20" pillows feature weltcord embellishments as well as several fashionable colors and patterns to choose from. Item #696350. Warehouse only.

### E. Adult XC6 26" Mountain Bike

Lightweight 6061 aluminum frame comes with Shimano crank, drivetrain and shifters; Tektro disc brakes; SR VCT fork; and WTB saddle and tires. Item #910010. Warehouse only.

### F. Samsung WB250 Smart Camera

With built-in Wi-Fi connectivity, you can upload, shoot and share photos instantly. Also features a 3" touch screen, 18x optical zoom and full HD movie recording. Bundle includes a 16 GB SD card and camera case. Item #727364. Warehouse and Costco.com.



# FOR QUICK PAIN RELIEF... COUNT ON KIRKLAND SIGNATURE.

Kirkland Signature Ibuprofen Softgels offer you fast-acting relief that is gentle on your stomach. Our liquid-filled softgels are easy to swallow and relieve pain associated with headache, muscle aches, arthritis, toothaches, backaches and more.

A Dose of Quality and Value!

Exclusively from Costco Wholesale
WAREHOUSE ONLY | AVAILABLE NOW
Item #196911



# CONSTIPATION RELIEF MADE EASY.

Almost everyone has experienced constipation during his or her lifetime. Kirkland Signature Stool Softener provides fast-acting, gentle relief for this all-too-common problem. For comfortable relief of occasional constipation, Kirkland Signature Stool Softener is the way to go.

A Dose of Quality and Value!

Exclusively from Costco Wholesale
WAREHOUSE ONLY | AVAILABLE NOW
Item #629240



# PACKED WITH EXTRA SCRUBBING POWER



TENCEL®

### Extra-large disinfecting wipes

- Kills cold and flu virus\*
- 43% larger than the leading brand wipes
- Eco-Paks use less plastic than canisters

### Introducing Our New Package!

4 Eco-Paks in one convenient box. Now with more scrubbing wipes!

**Quality. Performance. Value.** 

\*Effective against common cold virus caused by Corona virus and common flu virus caused by Influenza A/Hong Kong

Exclusively from Costco Wholesale WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM | AVAILABLE NOW Item #691270





### Click here for a list of special events by region.

### ALASKA

Anchorage

Mar 15-24 Jennifer Adams microfiber bedding

**Anchorage II** 

Mar 1–10 Jennifer Adams microfiber bedding

### IDAHO

Coeur d'Alene

Mar 22-31 Jennifer Adams microfiber bedding

Nampa Mar 15-24 Women's apparel

**Pocatello** 

Mar 29-Apr 7 Traeger pellet grills **Twin Falls** 

Mar 15-24 Traeger pellet grills

### **MONTANA**

**Billings** Mar 8–17 Women's apparel Mar 29–Apr 7 Jennifer Adams microfiber bedding

Bozeman

Mar 8–17 Jennifer Adams microfiber bedding Mar 22-30 Traeger pellet grills

Helena

Mar 15-24 Traeger pellet grills

Kalispell

Mar 8–17 Miracle Door Mats Mar 8–17 Traeger pellet grills

Missoula

Mar 22–31 Miracle Door Mats

### **OREGON**

Aloha

Mar 22-31 Women's apparel **Bend** Mar 8-17 Jennifer Adams

microfiber bedding Mar 22-31 Little Giant ladders

Clackamas

Mar 22-31 Miracle Door Mats Eugene

Mar 15-24 Portable solar power Hillsboro

Mar 8-17 Traeger pellet grills Mar 15-24 Rwandan baskets, jewelry and handbags

Medford

Mar 1-10 Rwandan baskets, jewelry and handbags Mar 8–17 Miracle Door Mats Mar 8–17 Silk-fiber-filled bedding

**Portland** 

Mar 1-10 Jennifer Adams microfiber bedding Mar 22–31 Storage sheds Mar 29–Apr 7 Rwandan baskets, jewelry and handbags

**Roseburg** Mar 8–17 Storage sheds Mar 22–31 Portable solar power

Salem

Mar 1-10 Women's apparel Mar 15-24 Sebamed skin care

**Tigard** 

Mar 8–17 Professional cookware Warrenton

Mar 1–10 Sebamed skin care Mar 22–31 Women's apparel

Wilsonville

Mar 8–17 Traeger pellet grills Mar 15–24 Professional cookware

### UTAH

Lehi

Mar 1–10 Massage chairs Mar 29–Apr 7 Miracle Door Mats

Mar 1-10 Portable solar power Mar 15-24 Miracle Door Mats

Ogden Mar 8-17 Professional cookware

Orem Mar 15-24 Little Giant ladders

**Salt Lake City** 

Mar 15–24 Women's apparel Sandy

Mar 8–17 Silk-fiber-filled bedding **Spanish Fork** Mar 29–Apr 7 Women's apparel

West Bountiful Mar 29-Apr 7 Storage sheds

West Valley

Mar 1-10 Miracle Door Mats Mar 22-31 Rwandan baskets, jewelry and handbags

### WASHINGTON

**Aurora Village** 

Mar 8–17 Professional cookware Mar 8–17 Storage sheds Mar 15-24 Silk-fiber-filled bedding

**Bellingham** 

Mar 29-Apr 7 Traeger pellet grills Burlington

Mar 15-24 Traeger pellet grills Mar 22-31 Professional cookware

Clarkston Mar 1–10 Traeger pellet grills

Covington

Mar 1–10 Jennifer Adams microfiber bedding

East Wenatchee

Mar 29-Apr 7 Little Giant ladders Everett Mar 15–24 Storage sheds Mar 22–31 Professional cookware

**Federal Way** 

Mar 1–10 Sebamed skin care Mar 8–17 Rwandan baskets. iewelry and handbags

Dates and events are subject to change. Special Events for other regions may be found on Costco.com; type "special events" into the search box.

Mar 22-31 Jennifer Adams microfiber bedding

**Gig Harbor** 

Mar 29–Apr 7 Traeger pellet grills

Issaquah

Mar 1-10 Storage sheds Mar 22-31 Jennifer Adams microfiber bedding

Mar 29-Apr 7 Sebamed skin care Kennewick

Mar 15-24 Silk-fiber-filled bedding Kirkland

Mar 8-17 Traeger pellet grills Mar 15-24 Silk-fiber-filled bedding

Lacev

Mar 22–30 Traeger pellet grills

Marysville

Mar 8–17 Hydration packs Mar 15-24 Silk-fiber-filled bedding

Puvallup

Mar 1-10 Gunter Wilhelm cutlery Mar 8-17 Traeger pellet grills

Seattle

Mar 29-Apr 7 Miracle Door Mats Silverdale

Mar 15-24 Miracle Door Mats Spokane

Mar 15-24 Massage chairs N Spokane

Mar 1-10 Portable solar power

Tacoma

Mar 1-10 Storage sheds Mar 22-30 Traeger pellet grills

Tukwila

Mar 1-10 Women's apparel Mar 15-24 Silk-fiber-filled bedding

Tumwater

Mar 1–10 Silk-fiber-filled bedding Union Gap

Mar 15-24 Traeger pellet grills Mar 22–31 Women's apparel

Vancouver

Mar 29–Apr 7 Jennifer Adams microfiber bedding **E Vancouver** 

Mar 22-31 Gunter Wilhelm cutlery

Woodinville

Mar 15–24 Silk-fiber-filled bedding Mar 22–31 Little Giant ladders

### warehouse hours

Monday-Friday 10am-8:30pm Saturday 9:30am–6pm Sunday 10am-6pm

Costco.com open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

**Additional Services** 

Costco Auto Program 1-800-800-9288: www.costcoauto.com Fife and Lynnwood, WA,

**Business Centers, Print & Copy** Centers. Delivery to businesses, more business products. Open to all Costco members. 1-800-788-9968

specialty.			2		sk			≣		ن .		
services	9	am	<b>Business Delivery</b>		Costco.com Kiosk	_	ş	Ink Cartridge Refi		Print & Copy Cti		_
at your local warehouse or business center	I-Hour Photo	Auto Program	ess D	ash	o.con	Gas Station	Hearing Aids	urtrid	_	S S S	ne	Service Deli
	루	uto	usin	Car Wash	osta	ias St	learir	¥ Cg	Optical	rint	Propane	ervic
ALASKA Anchorage	•	•	8	S	S	•	•	-	•	۵.	_	·S
Anchorage II	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Juneau												
IDAHO Boise												
Coeur d'Alene	•	•			Ť	•	•	•	•			•
Nampa	•	•			•	•	•	•	•			•
Pocatello	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Twin Falls MONTANA	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Billings												
Bozeman	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Helena	•	•			•	•	•	•	•			•
Kalispell Missoula	•	•				•	•	•	•		•	•
OREGON	Ť	_					-					Ť
Albany	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Aloha	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Bend Clackamas	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Eugene	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Hillsboro	•	•			•	•	•	•	•			•
Medford	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Portland Roseburg	•	•			•	•	•	•	•			•
Salem	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Tigard	•	•					•	•	•			•
Warrenton		•				•	•		•			•
Wilsonville	•	•			•	•	•	•	•			•
UTAH Lehi												
Murray	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Ogden	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Orem	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
St. George Salt Lake City	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Sandy	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Spanish Fork	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
West Bountiful	•	•			•	•	•	•	•			•
West Valley	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
WASHINGTON Aurora Village						•						
Bellingham	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Burlington	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Clarkston	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Covington  East Wenatchee	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Everett	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Federal Way	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Fife Business Center		•	•			_	_	_	_	•		_
Gig Harbor Issaquah	•	•			•	•	•	•	•			•
Kennewick	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Kirkland	•	•			•	•	•	•	•			•
Lacey	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Lynnwood Business Ctr. Marysville	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•		•
Puyallup	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Seattle	•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•		•
Sequim	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Silverdale Spokane	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
N Spokane	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Tacoma	•	•				•	•	•	•		Í	•
Tukwila	•	•				•	•	•	•	•		•
Tumwater Union Gap	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Vancouver	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
E Vancouver	•	•				•	•	•	•			•
Woodinville	•	•			•	•	•	•	•			•
Services at all locat				XC	ept	: Fi	fe	and	d			

### Lynnwood Business Centers)

ATM, Bakery, Deli/Produce, Executive Membership, Food Court or Hot Dog Cart, Fresh Meat, Pharmacy, Special Order Kiosk and

Tire Service Center
Costco Travel.\* 1-877-849–2730

Costco Services. A suite of discount business and consumer services.\* 1-800-220-6000

\*Also available at Costco.com

### COSTCO SERVICES

To learn more about our complete suite of Costco services, click on the "Services" link at Costco.com or call toll-free 1-800-220-6000.

PROGRAM EXPANSION

### New savings for the Golden and Sunshine states

MEMBERS IN FLORIDA now have access to Costco's health insurance plans provided by Aetna.

Recently launched in California, the service is also available in Arizona, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, Nevada,

Pennsylvania, Texas and Virginia. The five health insurance plans include a range of coverage and cost options, so members can select a plan that suits their lifestyle and budget.

For Costco member Sydney Rhind-Westrate of Wheaton, Illinois, it was the combination of two well-known names-Costco and Aetna—that prompted her to switch health insurance providers

when it was time to renew coverage for her family of four. Not only is she saving about \$70 a month with the Costco plan, Rhind-Westrate says, but the family is getting the added value of dental insurance.

In addition to dental coverage, highlights of the available plans include a network of

unlimited coverage and lower co-pays at Costco retail pharmacies.

and expect the exceptional value that Costco

ance is no exception," says Lisa Castaneda, Costco services manager. "Costco pharmacies are the market filling prescriptions at to make sure we recognized the value our pharmacies offer by incorporating that into our benefit plans."

For more information about the individual health insurance plans, visit Costco.com, select "Services" and then "Personal Health Insurance," or call 1-866-286-3155.

more than 900,000 healthcare providers.

"Our members have come to appreciate negotiates on their behalf, and health insur-

> leaders when it comes to the best cost. We wanted



As for Rhind-IMAGEZOO Westrate, she says the decision was a no-brainer: "[Signing up] was easy, it saves us money and Costco is a wellknown, trusted brand."

### SMART SAVINGS

### **Great time to refinance**

THANKS TO RECORD low rates, an increasing number of homeowners are opting for a 15-year mortgage over the more traditional 30-year mortgage. In fact, approximately one-third of all mortgage refinance loans are 15-year mortgages.

While a 15-year mortgage may result in a higher monthly payment, the interest rates are typically lower. In fact, interest rates on 15-year mortgages are the lowest they've been since the 1940s.

"More importantly, the interest you save by paying off the loan sooner

is significant," says Bernie Deckys, Costco services manager. "If you're close to having 15 years left on your mortgage, or have the monthly cash flow, 10-year mortgages are also available and will cut the interest paid over the life of the loan even more."

Deckys adds that the Costco mortgage program, offered through First Choice Loan

Services, has competitive rates and offers tools for calculating monthly payments.

To see the latest interest rates available and to calculate what your monthly payment would be with a 15-year mortgage, go to Costco.com and enter "compare" in the search box

### **RAVE REVIEW**

### The wow factor

LONGTIME COSTCO MEMBER Glen Ayers had, on occasion, stopped in front of his local warehouse to admire a vehicle or check out the sticker price, but he and his wife, Cheri, had never considered using the Costco Auto Program (CAP). That is, until late 2012, when they learned about the limited-time offer on select Chevrolet, Buick and GMC vehicles. In a letter to Costco, Ayers writes, "Since my wife's lease was coming to the end we decided to investigate. Getting a vehicle can sometimes be a pain, but not this time around! What we found was a no-hassle value way to lease a vehicle. We chose a local dealership, and the process

could not have been more seamless. We are thankful for the services offered by Costco. and as long as you reach out to your mem-



can be sure we will remain wowed "

Ayers adds that a friend who is retired from General Motors was able to get them a friends-and-family discount. But when the Jacksonville, Florida, couple compared the

GM discount to CAP's prices and factored in the \$500 Costco Cash card they'd get for leasing during the limited-time sales event, the decision was easy.

Cheri Avers chose a 2013 Chevrolet Equinox, and because it was her car, she'll be driving the decision on how to spend their Costco Cash card.

For more information on CAP, see the article on page 77, or visit Costco.com and enter "CAP Update" in the search box.

All services are provided by third parties, may not be available in all areas and are subject to change without notice. Some restrictions apply, See "Services" at Costco.com for applicable terms and conditions.

### **MEMBER**connection

# Gown prince

IF YOU'RE LIKE some women, you fantasize about that red-carpet moment when you hit the town looking so glamorous you can almost hear the popping of paparazzi flashbulbs. Luckily for you, Michael Weintraub, a Costco member, either has that dress from your dream or can likely find it in your size and color.

The owner of Dressed Up (www.dressed-up.com), a Tarzana, California–based evening wear superstore, works with top designers and is a regular at industry trade shows, where he bags the latest styles and then sells them for relatively affordable prices (\$200 to \$1,100 per dress). That's why, for many women, Dressed Up has become "Gown Central Station."

"We have one of the best selections anywhere," says Weintraub, an ebullient, gregarious

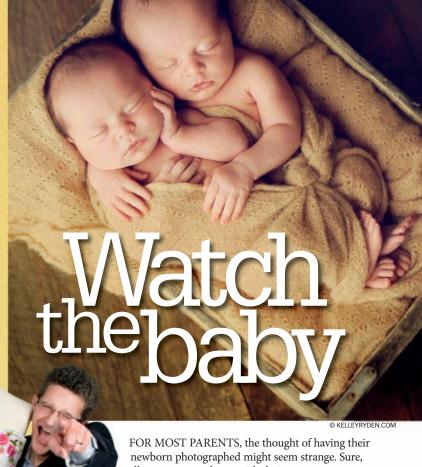
53-year-old. A quick flick through the racks in his 4,000-square-foot shop shows something eye-catching for just about any special occasion: prom, bridal party, cotillion, bat mitzvah, even the Oscars. Weintraub and his staff work hard to make sure every customer feels like a starlet. "When that happens," he says, "I know we've done it, because when you go to that event, it's showtime."

A few years ago, during the financial crisis, Weintraub rebuilt his business, which now boasts a wholesale division and eBay stores. An increasing number of sales come through online shoppers, many outside America, such as Australia, Russia, the UK and Yemen. "We do big business in the Middle East," says Weintraub, whose sales staff speaks multiple languages. "There seem to be a lot of women getting dressed up in Qatar."

Weintraub never imagined dressing women for a living. He holds both an MBA and a law degree from the University of Southern California. Prior to opening Dressed Up in 1991, he worked at a prestigious law firm in Beverly Hills, "making more money than any 24-year-old should ever get their hands on," he says. "But I was miserable." After

resigning, Weintraub took a position at his father's clothing store, selling casual women's wear until, he says, his ego told him it was time to "move out" and start his own business.

What he loves most is working with people, particularly women. "They're so demonstrative," he says. "They tell you what they think, and I like that. It's a good fit."—Craigh Barboza



FOR MOST PARENTS, the thought of having their newborn photographed might seem strange. Sure, all parents snap photos with their own cameras or video cameras, but they likely never considered a professional photo shoot.

"Newborn photography is really popular right now," says photographer Kelley Ryden (www.kelleyryden.com), who, with her twin sister, Tracy Raver (www.tracyraver. com), has mastered the art popularized by worldfamous Anne Geddes. "Now parents know you get them photographed between days five and 10. We get em really young. Because they do change so much those first few weeks."

The Omaha, Nebraska, Costco members' photos have garnered worldwide attention through their appearances on NBC's *Today* show and other media. Now, in addition to their ongoing studio work, the twins are spreading their knowledge through workshops at their studio, as well as around the world, and have had three books of their work published. Ryden says their style is to be as natural and simple as possible.

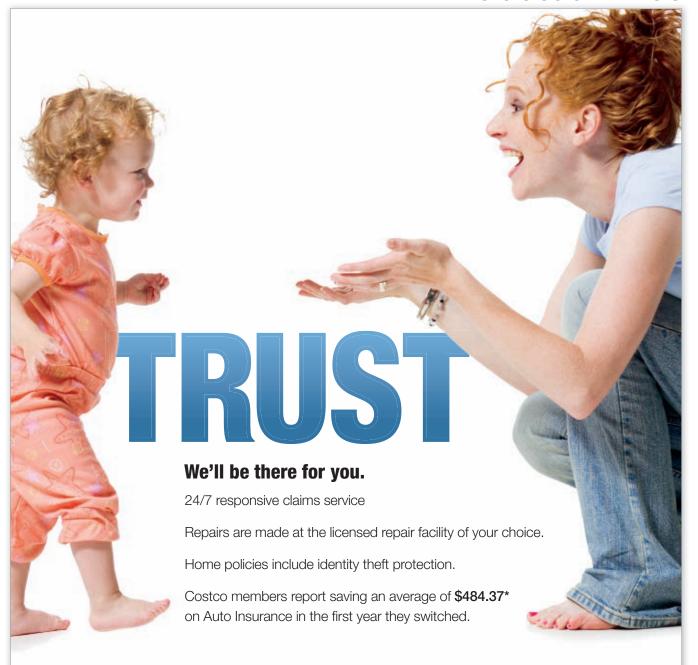
"I do a little bit of work in Photoshop," she says, "but if I don't have to do a lot to it, I'm not going to. My feeling with a newborn is you don't want to touch their skin up too much so they don't have that natural softness. Tracy and I, our philosophy of newborn photography, we want them to look like how they look at that time.

"I think some people have a natural instinct to work with newborns, and Tracy and I do both have that," she adds. "When we have a session with a newborn, there's never a peep: They're always calm, safe and asleep."—Steve Fisher

### We want to hear from you! If you have a note, photo or story to share about Costco or Costco

If you have a note, photo or story to share about Costco or Costco members, email it to connection@costco.com with "The Member Connection" in the subject line or send it to The Member Connection, The Costco Connection, P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088. Submissions cannot be acknowledged or returned.

# Think Costco First



Call 1-888-404-5365

Or visit Costco.com and search: InsureMe. Mention reference number 8C2-03.





Insurance is underwritten by IDS Property Casualty Insurance Company and Ameriprise Insurance Company, both in De Pere, Wisconsin. Each company is a subsidiary of Ameriprise Financial, Inc. The auto and home insurance program is not available in AK, FL, LA, ME, ND, RI, WV, WY and Puerto Rico. Discounts and savings vary by state and apply to certain coverages. Insurance availability may vary by region or state. Certain restrictions and limitations apply. Ameriprise Auto & Home Insurance's California license number is 0C41813. Costco Insurance Agency, Inc.'s California license number is 0D08407.

\*Savings data represents information provided by Costco members who became new auto policyholders with Ameriprise Auto & Home Insurance and reported annual savings between 6/1/12 and 11/30/12. Individual savings and experience may vary based upon a variety of factors including, but not limited to, driving experience and type of automobile insured.

## Think Costco First

Receive a **free** terminal\*

when you open a new merchant credit card processing account by March 29.

Plus, exclusive rates" for Costco members.







Call **1-877-892-9349** and refer to priority code **83210**.\*\*
Visit Costco.com and search: **Merchant**.

\*Terms and conditions apply. Must be a Costco member and open a new merchant account by March 29, 2013, to qualify for this offer. Offer not to exceed \$200. Free equipment is limited to select terminal or software products. \$200 equipment purchase fee will be applied the month the account is opened and credited back for all qualified accounts that remain open after 90 days. If other equipment/software types are selected or no equipment is requested, a \$200 statement credit will be applied for all qualified accounts that remain open after 90 days. A signed Free Terminal/Statement Credit Addendum must be returned to Elavon with signed application. Limit one offer per merchant/member and cannot be combined with any other Elavon offer.

\*\*Visa/MasterCard/Discover service is sponsored through Elavon, Inc. Rates listed are for qualified transactions. A monthly minimum charge applies when qualified transaction fees and per-item charges are less than \$20 per month. Annual interchange or assessment increases by Visa/MasterCard or Discover may affect these rates. Rates and fees may change without notice. Rate and acceptance are subject to underwriting. Call Elavon at 1-877-892-9349 for all terms and conditions.

13EX0522 1/13



